1993 WRESTLING FLYER YEARBOOK

VINCE McMAHON

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEWS WITH TED DIBIASE AND SID VICIOUS

THIRTY WRESTLERS, PROMOTERS, AND JOURNALISTS IN THE BUSINESS DISCUSS THE YEAR 1993 AND THE FUTURE OF WRESTLING

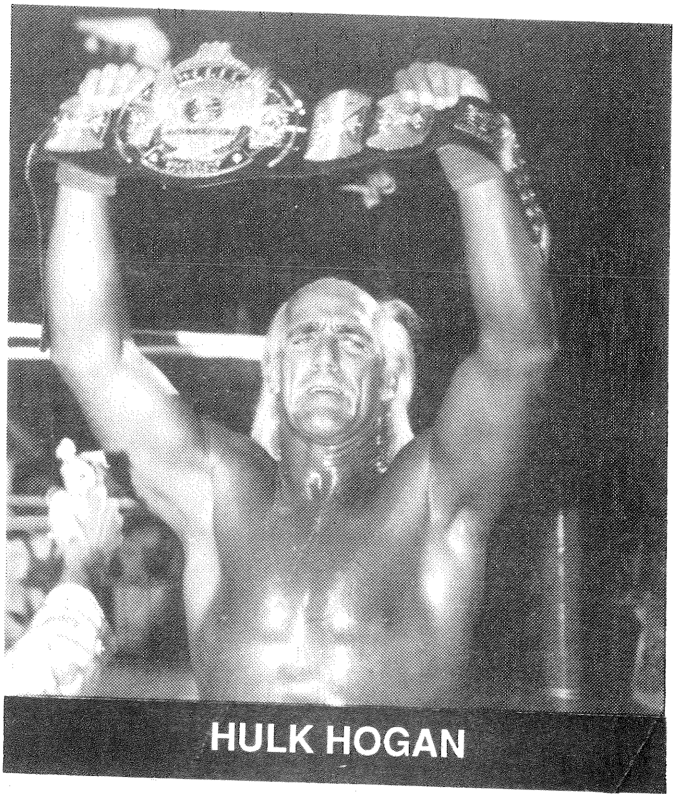
TEN PHOTOS OF SOME OF WRESTLING'S MOST FASCINATING PEOPLE

MINI-CATALOG OF WRESTLING PRODUCTS

1993: THE YEAR IN REVIEW

1993 READERS POLL

NEW YORK POST
PINNED
Feds indict wrestle king in steroid pump-up scam



HULK HOGAN

VINCE McMAHON AND HULK HOGAN

THE MOST POWERFUL AND SUCCESSFUL "TAG TEAM" THAT RULED UNITED STATES WRESTLING AND CHANGED THE FACE OF IT OVER THE PAST TEN YEARS ARE NOW HEADED FOR THE "MATCH OF THE CENTURY" IN A COURTROOM THIS COMING YEAR IN WHAT COULD ONCE AGAIN CHANGE THE FACE OF THE WRESTLING BUSINESS

1993 WRESTLING FLYER YEARBOOK
BY EDITOR JOHN CLARK

1993 WRESTLING FLYER YEARBOOK

EDITOR: **JOHN CLARK**
PHOTOGRAPHS BY: **JOHN CLARK;**
DONNY LAIBLE- HONKY TONK COVER SHOT

I wanted to take this opportunity to explain the philosophy I have used in producing and editing and publishing the Wrestling Flyer Newsletter. I make the focus of every issue on an interview with someone in the wrestling business who the readers could benefit from and learn from his experiences and knowledge of the business. I have tried to keep my personal opinions and reactions on news happening out of the newsletter because I do not feel that my opinion is any better than any of the readers. It simply is an opinion. I certainly have many ideas and thoughts about the wrestling business that I love discussing in conversation, but I do not work in it, nor am I around it on a daily basis or do it for a living. That is why I leave my opinion out of it and bring you the valued opinions and experiences through the interviews with individuals who make a living in the business, have been around it a lot of their life, etc. Wrestling Observer editor Dave Meltzer produces the weekly encyclopedia on all that is happening in the business and he also states his opinions on many of the things that are going on. He has created his niche and could quite possibly be considered a legitimate expert on the wrestling business. Pro Wrestling Torch editor Wade Keller publishes a slick looking weekly newsletter with all the news but also tons of opinion from him and his staff writers. So to produce a newsletter that could even stay viable I knew that I had to create my own niche, which I hope I have been able to do. I also in my newsletter try not be as judgemental when describing events that take place in or out of the ring.

Rating matches with a star system is something that I feel is not appropriate. Firstly, the match is a work. It is several performers getting out there to present and orchestrate what is supposed to be a story with a mix of athletics and drama involved. But there are so many different items that affect a match's quality and value, which alter one's perception of it; the ability of the performers to work and cooperate together, the conditions with the crowd and the arena and their mood for the match, how much time they were given by the promoter to put together their match, injured or hurting workers, effect of the traveling done to get where the wrestlers need to go, and quite possibly the activities they were engaging in the night before (which is in no way an excuse). I feel that an entire card of matches, the total package that a fan pays for or sees, could and should be rated and judged. But I think it is unfair to dissect and rate each match, because even the positioning of the matches on the card affects the ability of them to get over. The other confusing part about the star system is the criteria and what exactly that is. A quality wrestling match isn't always in the work rate. The recent Ric Flair-Big Van Vader match at Starrcade did not feature the best work those two are certainly capable of, however, it was probably the finest moment in 1993. The Jerry Lawler and Bret Hart SummerSlam deal certainly did not contain some of the best wrestling but it captured the attention of the viewer and creatively held it for the entire angle. That is the job of the professioanal wrestler. I just simply feel it is unnecessary to rate an exhibition where the main objective is to suspend the audience's disbelief and to entertain them with a variety of methods all pertaining to what professional wrestling is. The other factor in the judging of matches that should be considered is the idea that any wrestling match could mean many different things to many different people. And I do not think it is rational to have the same star system for house show matches, TV matches, and matches on PPV, because they all have different purposes. Also matches in Japan greatly differ in context and meaning with matches in Mexico to matches in the United States. Therefore, I do not think it is sensible to have these different styles on the same rating system. And for those who look at wrestling as an athletic contest, sports writters do not rate football games or baseball games or any legitimate sports event. Finally, why didn't the Andre the Giant-Hulk Hogan match at Wrestlemania III receive nearly as many stars in some of the main wrestling newsletters as the recent Flair-Vader match when it educed as much and most probably more emotions and aroused as much interest from the wrestling audience? So they did their job. To me it is unfair to rate professional wrestling matches with the star system when the workers involved in it are doing the job asked of them by the promoter and the wrestling fan.

Additional copies of this yearbook can be ordered for $12 ($15 outside of United States) each or two for $20. The Wrestling Flyer Newsletter is a biweekly publication available by subscription for customers in the United States and Canada at $1.50 per issue, $6 for 4 issues, $12 for 8 issues, $18 for 12 issues, etc. Overseas orders are $2.50 per issue, $10 for 4 issues, $20 for 8 issues, $30 for 12 issues, etc. Each issue features a topical and pertinent interview with different personalities in the wrestling business, all the latest news from the World Wrestling Federation and World Championship Wrestling, and select news from the independent scene. Send all subscription orders and merchandise orders (please make all payments payable to John Clark), letters, news, articles, and all other inquiries to the address below. Thank you to the readers of the Wrestling Flyer and for your support. I hope each and everyone of you have a fantastic 1994 and are able to enjoy your lives to the fullest.

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1993 WRESTLING FLYER READERS POLL

The 1993 Wrestling Flyer Readers Poll results were derived from the responses by the readers of the newsletter that were accepted either by telephone or by mail in the month of December up until 12/23/93. Twenty questions that would hopefully diagnose the current state of the wrestling business from the consumer's point of view were answered by the readers. This poll and the results of it were strictly and solely based on the professional wrestling in the United States and Canada. Promotions that were admitted were; World Wrestling Federation, World Championship Wrestling, United States Wrestling Alliance, Smoky Mountain Wrestling, Eastern Championship Wrestling, and all other independent organizations that held events in the United States and Canada. Wrestling in Japan, Mexico, Germany, Australia, England, and all other foreign companies were not considered and were omitted from this poll. I feel it would not have been an objective inquiry or fair to include various other countries' pro wrestling products when the ambition of this poll was to take the pulse of the consumers and the fans relating to United States wrestling specifically. Thanks to the seventy-nine readers who participated in this poll.

1.Was this year a positive or negative year for the wrestling business?

65	Negative
14	Positive

2.Overall did the WWF PPVs live up to their expectations?

61	No
18	Yes

3.Overall did the WCW PPVs live up to their expectations?

74	No
5	Yes

4.What was the best overall television show this year?

53	WWF Monday Night Raw
20	Smoky Mountain Wrestling
3	WWF Superstars
2	NWA Eastern Championship Wrestling
1	WCW Saturday Night

5.Which promotion offered the best product this year?

36	Smoky Mountain Wrestling
27	World Wrestling Federation
13	Eastern Championship Wrestling
2	United States Wrestling Association
1	World Championship Wrestling

6.Who was the most outstanding wrestler of this year?

25	Big Van Vader
23	Sabu
20	Bret Hart
8	Shawn Michaels
2	Undertaker
1	Paul Orndorff

7.Who comprised the most outstanding tag team this year?

38	Brian Pillman & Steve Austin
22	Heavenly Bodies
12	Rick & Scott Steiner
3	Quebecers
2	Head Shrinkers
2	Too Cold Scorpio & Marcus Bagwell

8.Who comprised the best announcing team in 1993?

44	Vince McMahon & Bobby Heenan
15	Jim Ross & Bobby Heenan
13	Tony Shiavone & Jesse Ventura
4	Vince McMahon & Jerry Lawler & Randy Savage
2	Gorilla Monsoon & Jim Ross
1	Bob Caudle & Dutch Mantell

9.What manager was the most effective in his/her role this year?

60	Jim Cornette
6	Tammy Fytch
5	Harley Race
4	Paul E. Dangerously
2	Mr. Fuji
2	Toni Adams

10.What wrestler was the most effective with their interviews?

30	Jerry Lawler
18	Ric Flair
8	Undertaker
4	Cactus Jack
4	Brian Christopher
3	Rick Rude
3	Razor Ramon
2	Terry Funk
2	Arn Anderson
2	Shawn Michaels
2	Tracy Smothers
1	Ludvig Borga

11. Who gave the most outstanding effort and devotion to their job?

27	Bret Hart
15	Sabu
12	Jim Cornette
8	Big Van Vader
6	1-2-3 Kid
5	Terry Funk
4	Vince McMahon
4	Cactus Jack
2	Undertaker
2	Eddie Gilbert
2	Bobby Heenan
1	Brian Christopher
1	Johnny B. Badd

12. Who was the best babyface of 1993?

46	Bret Hart
13	Undertaker
5	1-2-3 Kid
4	Ric Flair
4	Sting
2	Rick & Scott Steiner
2	Lex Luger
2	Cactus Jack
1	Tracy Smothers

13. Who was the best heel of 1993?

30	Jerry Lawler
21	Big Van Vader
14	Shawn Michaels
5	Yokozuna
2	Eddie Gilbert
2	Paul Orndorff
2	Rick Rude
2	Doink the Clown
1	Ludvig Borga

14. What was the best feud of this year?

39	Bret Hart vs Jerry Lawler
13	Rock & Roll Express vs Heavenly Bodies
7	Cactus Jack vs Big Van Vader
4	Jeff Jarrett vs Brian Christopher
4	Undertaker vs Yokozuna
3	Terry Funk vs Sabu
3	Terry Funk vs Eddie Gilbert
2	Ric Flair vs Big Van Vader
2	Ric Flair vs Mr. Perfect
1	Bruise Brothers vs Heavenly Bodies
1	Tracy Smothers vs Brian Lee vs Dirty White Boy

15. Who was the best promoter this year?

36	Vince McMahon
31	Jim Cornette
9	Tod Gordon
2	Jerry Jarrett

16. What was the best overall wrestling newsletter this year?

56	Wrestling Observer
17	Pro Wrestling Torch
4	Wrestling Flyer
2	Wrestling Chatterbox

17. What was the best thing that happened in/for wrestling this year?

28	Vince McMahon working with Cornette and Lawler
18	Improvement and success of the independent circuit
11	"Retirement" of Hulk Hogan
6	AAA running shows in U.S.
4	Justice Department investigating Vince McMahon
3	WWF's Monday Night Raw program
3	Return of Shawn Michaels
2	Smoky Mountain on Channel America
2	UWFI PPV brought to the United States
1	Ric Flair challenging Big Van Vader
1	Anticipation of Dusty Rhodes' departure

18. What was the worst thing that happened in/for wrestling this year?

34	Scandals with indictments
22	WCW still in business
10	Hulk Hogan returning and winning the WWF title
8	Poor quality of wrestling on PPV and television
4	Booking of Dusty Rhodes
2	WCW's Orlando television tapings
2	Rehashing of Hulk Hogan and the Four Horseman

19. What was the highlight of the year in wrestling for you?

12	Seeing Sabu perform live in person
10	Violence/action of Eastern Championship Wrestling
10	Ric Flair back with World Championship Wrestling
9	WWF working with Jim Cornette and SMW
8	Performances from the independent circuit
6	Seeing Smoky Mountain Wrestling live in person
5	Bret Hart's performance at King of the Ring
5	Yokozuna winning the WWF title from Hulk Hogan
2	Seeing WCW live in person in England
2	Jerry Lawler's performance at SummerSlam
2	Indictment of Vince McMahon
2	AAA's successful return show to Los Angeles
1	Ric Flair pinning Big Van Vader at the Clash
1	Big Van Vader winning WCW title for third time
1	Debut of WWF's Monday Night Raw
1	Seeing World Wrestling Federation live in person
1	Quebecers beat The Steiners to win WWF belts
1	Dusty Rhodes taking shot with belt at the Clash

20. Were you satisfied as a fan with the pro wrestling product in 1993?

49	No
30	Yes

*Notes: While most of the fans thought that 1993 was a negative year for wrestling and that they were disappointed in the major events from the top two promotions, it was sort of interesting to see that their satisfaction was not lower than it was. Also please keep in mind that a large percentage of the readers are from the Philadelphia and Northeastern United States region, meaning they have been exposed to a lot more independents than other parts of the country have. Which I think showed to be a major factor in their voting. The majority of their responses were without a doubt more related to and oriented towards the independents, rather than the major promotions.

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1993 WRESTLING BUSINESS ANALYSIS

Three pertinent questions were asked by me of thirty individuals who either work in the wrestling business or are very close to its operations, as a useful method to discover and understand the different impressions and reactions possessed by various wrestlers, managers, promoters, and media members in the industry, on the current state of their business as 1994 brings the year 1993 to a close. The following individuals participated in this systematic analysis of their business of professional wrestling and I thank each of them for their valued input:

Bill Apter, senior editor of all of London Publishing's wrestling mags
John Arezzi, former Spotlight reporter and now indy promoter
Chris Benoit, phenomenal worker from Calgary now famous in Japan
Steve Beverly, formerly and once again editor of Matwatch
Tully Blanchard, former ring great who left wrestling for Jesus Christ
Chris Candito, rising indy star currently with Smoky Mountain
Dennis Coralluzzo, indy promoter and board member of the NWA
Paul E. Dangerously, manager and current ECW/WWN booker
Paul Diamond, worked in WWF as Max Moon and now doing indys
Shane Douglas, now teaching full-time and working indys
Jim Duggan, doing indys after working for Titan for last seven years
Bill Eadie, wrestled as Masked Superstar and now Demolition Ax
Terry Funk, legendary performer now working select indy dates
Tod Gordon, financial backer for and also promoter of ECW
Johnny Gunn, has changed ring name from Tom Brandi after WCW
Bruce Hart, wrestling brother of Bret who worked at Survivor Series
Honky Tonk Man, ex-WWFer working as a phys ed teacher
Tim Horner, happily working for Smoky Mountain Wrestling
Barry Horowitz, working indys and prelim matches for WWF
Ivan Koloff, running his wrestling school in Charlotte with indys
Killer Kowalski, running the IWF in Boston and training guys
Jerry Lawler, legend of Memphis who recently worked with WWF
Mark Madden, sports editor of a Pittsburgh paper and Torch writer
Dave Meltzer, editor of the Wrestling Observer Newsletter
Nailz, working as the Convict because of prior troubles with Vince
Matt Osborne, original Doink who's coming out with a new gimmick
Sabu, FMW sensation who works selected indy shows in U.S.
Tito Santana, recently left WWF after quite a lengthy stay
Kevin Sullivan, now working in Japan, Florida, and other indys
Nikolai Volkoff, still working independent shows and tours

What impact did the year 1993 have on the wrestling business and its overall success?

Bill Apter: Did 1993 help or hurt wrestling? I think it was a mixture of both. I think people thought that wrestling would be hurt by the final leaving of Hulk Hogan. But the business went on. I think the TV products; some of them have gotten better, some of them have gotten worse. It's hard to say. All in all, I think if wrestling in 1993 can get through all the negative mainstream publicity that has been going on, I think 1994 could be a banner year. If they can't get through the problems, I see wrestling almost going back to ground floor, returning to the way it was maybe in the 70s with the territories.

John Arezzi: I think what happened with the major promotions, WWF and WCW, there's really nothing positive coming out of both those major groups. So fans began looking more towards the independent scene and what independent promotions can offer. I think there's even going to be more of that in 1994. The fans are just tired of seeing the same old stuff, so it's up to the major promotions to take the bull by the balls, so to speak, and give the fans innovative stuff if they want to keep their interest. If not, there will be more opportunities for the independent promotions to thrive, if they give the fans what they want to see. By that I mean, the fans are trading tapes more than ever and looking at the Japan and Lucha Libre scenes. Fans want to see action and fans want to see stuff that's going to entertain them, and not the same old garbage. So I think the events in '93 will continue in '94. There will be more and more fans looking towards various other promotions rather than the major two.

Chris Benoit: There were positive events and there were also negative events. I think the wrestling business itself is constantly changing, and it's going through one of its major changes right now. I just try to put in as much positivity as I can and work as hard as I can to try to maintain a positive level in the wrestling business, because I think it's going through some turbulent years right now. As far as WCW, I don't really like to say anything about the way they run their business down there because it seems like everyone has a different perception or different ideas on how the business should be run. They do a heck of a lot of things that I think are really great and then they do other things that I disagree with. I'm sure that anyone would agree to that. I think the wrestling business is a real funny business because it's like art, as everyone has different ideas of the way it should be. The business advances in some ways and takes a step back in others. They're constantly coming up with new high-tech ideas for the TV show and their big shows. But then again, a lot of negative things have happened this past year that have hurt the business.

Steve Beverly: It's probably the most difficult to measure because I don't think we'll really see the impact until next year because of carry-over stories. I think the major measure is will Vince McMahon's negative publicity and his potential day in court ultimately lead to sweaping changes in his organization. That's a question we can't answer until next year. It hasn't had an immediate short-term effect on the TV ratings. I do think that we are continuing to see the industry based on continued oversaturation of television and continuing of the big two promotions, moreso WCW, trying to run too many small cities. I think in 1994 we are going to come closer than in any year to seeing wrestling evolve into a made-for-TV sport exclusively.

Tully Blanchard: I would think that the question is asked backwards. The industry impacted 1993. You can't say that any one year in an industry impacts that industry. It's a by-product of the preceding year or preceding years. 1993, of course I didn't watch either one of the two major companies that much, but they are just a by-product of the last two or three years preceding them. Not just a steady decline, but I think a major decline from where wrestling was when I was still active.

Chris Candito: People were saying that it was going to be an exciting year and a lot of things were going to happen. Besides Cornette and Smoky Mountain working for WWF and Lawler in Memphis and guys working for WWF, I don't think really anything all that exciting happened. Everything just kind of stayed consistent and stayed the same, which was pretty much negative. So a lousy year, as far as houses and stuff like that.

Hopefully '94 can be better, and it won't get any worse.

Dennis Coralluzzo: The lousy product put out by WCW and even a lot of the lousy product put out by WWF has caused a lot of fans to turn back towards the independents and it's caused a lot of people to start promoting independently. It's going to turn the independents around in 1994 because they now want to see something different. They've been killed by what's on TV, and I think it's going to be beneficial for independent promoters and fans because they're going to start flocking to independent shows. You're going to see more of a rise in independent promoters, more of a rise in independent stars. You're going to see a lot more independent fans going to the shows because of some of the stuff that happened with the two major companies. WCW has just put out nothing but junk, and I can't think of any independent show that doesn't outdraw WCW's house shows. The WWF's lack of a bonified superstar to push has hurt them. I think it's going to put independents on an upward swing to better business and a return to the regional and independent type promotions.

Paul Dangerously: A couple years ago, Sports Illustrated did a cover story on professional wrestling with Hulk Hogan on the cover. Inside towards the end of the article there was a quote from Dave Meltzer. The quote from Meltzer was basically that what Vince McMahon was trying to accomplish was to burn this great society of wrestling down to the ground and rebuild the new society. I think 1993 saw the burning to the ground of the wrestling society, and the future will hold either that wrestling will go the way of roller derby in which it will pretty much be a traveling carnival type atmosphere in which a few guys are going to make a decent living in or it's going to be built up from the ground again into a whole new era of wrestling. 1993 was the burning to the ground of the industry as we knew it.

Paul Diamond: I think certain people got way out of line with their characters and got way too cartoonish, for my taste anyway. It's hard to go back to saying it's a competition and the real wrestling when you've got clowns running around and guys doing voodoo. That's not blaming anybody, but that's the way I feel. I don't think that should have ever been done. I think that was going a little too far.

Shane Douglas: It had a hell of an impact on the sport. The fans out there reacted very powerfully that they wanted to stop seeing the bullshit. They wanted to stop seeing all this clown stuff and they wanted to stop seeing fat guys like Dusty Rhodes, and they wanted to start seeing the athletes again. They wanted to see them compete instead of being involved in soap operas. I think the smaller groups like ECW are now starting improvement because there's been a big push for that type of wrestling, to get back to the exciting side of wrestling and get away from all the bullshit. So 1993 was bad for a lot of the people in the sport, but for some people it's going to be very good because it's going to be like the shake down of the auto industry in the 1980s. It's going to get rid of all the fat non-streamline people, and bring in the streamline businesses that can give the fans what they want. It's going to be bad for a while, and good.

Jim Duggan: I think wrestling in general just kind of peaked in the United States in '93. It had been on an upswing and it just kind of peaked out, and it's starting to make a downswing now. But overall I think it was a good year for wrestling. A lot of adversity, but it's still going strong. I just think that Europe would be the newest and biggest market for professional wrestling in the years to come. I think Japan has kind of flat-lined out. I think United States is on a downswing. So I think Europe and South America are the places of the future for professional wrestling.

Bill Eadie: I think it had seen more controversey than an upscale. I think a lot of people are confused and a lot of people are seeing some of the behind the scenes activity that they probably weren't aware of. I don't think that it's going to damage wrestling in the long run because the sport itself is a good sport. Sometimes individuals run activities and run things that could be cleaned up. But I think it's going to continue. It may go down on a down cycle for a short period of time, which I think maybe a year or two. It's always survived in the past. I can't see that it wouldn't continue.

Terry Funk: I think that we have had such negative publicity over the past five years, from murders to suicides to whatever you can imagine. We have had some horrendous trash in this profession and we did not treat our profession as if it was a national business. I think all of that negative stuff will definitely have an effect on our profession. But I do believe that the profession will survive, and survive very well. I think it might have a different look than what we have ever thought about it before. Just like the television industry's going to change totally. Whenever we can plug in and get 500 channels, whenever Terry Funk out in the middle of nowhere can get cable and have the opportunity to have pay- per-view, and so can everybody else in the world, it's then upped your hardcore fans. That's the salvation of our business. We're going to have more hardcore fans with the capabilities to spend their dollar on professional wrestling. And they will, because they never have had the opportunity before.

Tod Gordon: The events of 1993 will change this wrestling business forever. You will never be able to view it the way you used to view it. I think that every organization both large and small will have to change the direction in which they intend to go in years to come. Because to stand still would be death.

Johnny Gunn: I think if anything it hurt the business just for the fact that it was in the news for all the wrong reasons. Turner more or less, it was just like another year for them. It wasn't good or bad. They got a lot of negative publicity when they had those tapings in Orlando. More or less for them I can tell you first hand they really price cut on their middle to bottom level full-time guys. There's only maybe fifteen to twenty top guys that didn't have to worry about their money. But everybody else, if they wanted to stay around, expected a lot less money. They went to really, really skimpy pay just because they know that guys will work cheap, and they didn't hold up their end in being a top league, which usually always pays the money. That's why everybody shoots to get there, for the money. Now you can't even get there for that. WWF, for them it had to be a negative year just for the fact they're always in the news for the wrong reasons. I don't think this year will be remembered for anything special, honestly.

Bruce Hart: All things considered, it was a really lackluster, dismal year, especially in WCW where they wasted a lot of talent. I think they are getting so damn far out, they can't get back to the middle of the road. Some of the crap with the boat exploding in the water and some of the other nonsense is signs of desparation and hotshotting at its worst. It seems like they lost a formula. I think there's a lot of room for improvement in the WWF too. I thought they were on the right track--you have to re-establish some wrestling--with Bret as a champion. I thought they really shot themselves in the foot three times with what they did at Wrestlemania where they effectively killed and really stifled Bret, Hogan, and Yokozuna's potential with the finish. When the smoke finally cleared, Hogan was not over, even though he had the belt. Yokozuna wasn't over because of what happened with Hogan. Bret wasn't over either because he didn't have the belt. The whole thing tarnished the image of the business and cheapened the belt, and just kind of left everybody with a lousy taste in their mouth. I think another aspect that's really brutal business is that ridiculous concept of shooting TV tapings several months in advance at WCW's endeavor. I had the misfortune of being down there in Orlando and saw one of those things. You have to actually see them to believe how bad they are. They were actually running around toasting each other like Bischoff and company on what a great job they had done. It was some radical rage concept like having some second-rate comedian agitating the crowd and shooting finishes for six months in advance. You have to be death, dumb, and blind, and maybe dead for several years to have any belief that there's some element of legitimacy. To me, that's a deviation. People should be able to in a good story or a good movie be able to digest it or interpret it or read between the lines and have some subtleties that allow you to make your own impressions rather than have obnoxious commentators. They're like a bunch of schysters, and the carnival barking and shoving crap down people's throats. I find that one of the big reasons the business has diminished so much is you're not even allowed to develop your own perceptions. It's like it's already done for you. This hard sell, shove it down their throat; "To hell with their interpretation, we're going to shove Lex Luger down their throat." They come out with these personas and then they just radically change without any thought. There's been so damn many switches in the last couple of years that the people's heads must be spinning. They just switched Owen fine and dandy. Unfortunately it's on the heels of Luger, Crush, Doink, Shawn Michaels, and on and on. It's switch, switch, switch every time they run out of things to do. That's desparation, thoughtless, with no heat on consequences or what's already preceded it. They're wondering why the hell they're not getting the fans, who are fairly tolerant and are there for the taking. But at some point they get so damn confused that they just turn off. That's one reason why very little that they're doing is getting any impact, because it's been flogged so much. Switch, switch, switch. They could switch the Pope and not get much reaction now. Same with the belts, I think in about twenty-five years from 1960 to '84, there was about seven or eight switches of the world belt, which is maybe too few. But in the last couple of years they've had the world title switch about a dozen times. Everybody from Bret to Yokozuna to Undertaker to Hogan to Flair have held it, and on and on. People are basically creatures of habit. You can't confuse them or piss them off too much. There's a certain way to piss the people off that's positive and there's a certain way that's negative. The negative way results in indifference. Once you get indifference, you know you're in trouble. When people finally don't even care, they're just so frustrated or they just feel like they can't take anymore. I've booked and been pretty in tune with what works and what doesn't in the business for twenty years or so. These things seem to me very simple or easy to see. I don't know whether it's desparation or they've got too many chiefs and not enough Indians, which I believe is the case too. The times that I've been down at WCW and WWF I've had a pretty good first-hand observation of the operations. It's almost amazing how many people are running around with clipboards and headphones, their heads up their butts, calling shots and backstabbing. I saw in WCW the thing in Orlando live and it was a complete abortion. I see stuff like WWF with their extensively endeavoring to have people take this schtick seriously. At the same time they have the eight Doinks or whatever. They seem to be scrambling. It's always been my estimation that it's a sign of things are in trouble when you have too many switches, too many belts changing hands, too many real extreme things all happening. Even if it takes a while or a little bit of down time, you've got to revert back to the basics and get a lot of the people to believe this isn't complete shit. You can't believe in it without feeling like a complete, unadulterated moron idiot. I'd have to say this was perhaps one of the worst years ever. It's not like there's some tremendous things on the horizon. I can't name much talent coming up that I would say is outstanding. I spoke to Vince and Bob Dhue about this, "At some point you've got to start developing talent." I think they're on the right track perhaps working with some of the smaller promotions, but they're not using those areas to develop talent. They're just using the retreaded talent like the Rock & Rolls. They're not even using that in a judicious manner. I spoke to Vince a few years ago about developing talent out here in Stampede, because we at least had a reputation for developing talent like Bret and Owen, the Bulldogs, Pillman, Benoit, Liger, Hase, and all them. By and large unless they think it's their own idea, they don't respond to anything. Vanity is such in most places. You have to be full of shit or some kind of a daydreamer to kid anybody that the business is in good shape. Except for Europe, which they're already flogging too much. You can only go to the well so many times. They seem to have this fucked up notion that the ulcer is going to get better on its on or that it's cyclical, all that type of rationalization and horse shit, but at some time somebody has to take the damn bull by the horns and make some fairly clear cut decisions. It's not that complicated. They're the ones that are complicating it. You have to let the wrestling fans think perhaps their cheering or support is actually a factor in the outcome of the matches. I always thought that was a standard or a given. The fans are all pre-conditioned to expect nothing ever happens on pay-per-views. There's so many things that have been perverted or fucked up with this business. It's really in a bunch of knots right now. At one point not that many years ago it was on the verge of becoming perhaps accepted as a major league sport. It was damn near on the level of hockey and basketball. It should have been growing and expanding like all these other sports. The morale's complete shit in WCW and the wrestlers are completely fed up and pissed off with the whole situation, but they're taking the money like, "Whatever these idiots want to us to do, that's what we'll do."

Honky Tonk Man: Overall I thought that 1993 was probably a bad year for the wrestling business not only with all the negative publicity but some of the negative angles and things that both companies did, as far as trying to create fan interest. It's like looking for a needle in a haystack now. They're struggling very hard. They've got everybody throwing the hay around looking for that needle, which is going to be the key to the turnaround to the business. When everybody's scrambling trying to find that secret answer, it tends to get the way they were in 1993, kind of upside down. I've had people ask me what do I think might have happened to the business with the negative publicity. I don't know if that was the key factor at all. To me, the average wrestling fan is not the guy that picks up the newspaper everyday and keeps up with all the stories going in the world affairs. The average wrestling fan is normally a blue collar guy that gets his news usually handed down by way of hearsay or somebody sitting around talking about it. That's the way I see it. The negative publicity didn't adversely effect the wrestling business. I think that the talent level in '93 has gone way, way down from what it was in '92, which was down from '91, and so forth. It's the level of talent. At one time the WWF had the top guys from all over America. The top draws that were from every territory across America and Canada. You can't say that now. If you look at that now, you'd have to say they have what's left of the bottom guys from around America. The wrestlers in the WWF, I use them for example because I know more about them, the wrestlers they have now are the guys that were trying to break in the USWA mostly or some of the other organizations around the country. Basically, they've got bottom level talent guys there. You can't draw with them. That's what's happening to WWF. WCW, they're like a ship on the ocean with nobody steering the boat. They've struggled for leadership, and they just don't have it down there. I don't know if it's internal problems within the structure of the organization or what it might be. They have a tendency to have stale talent there. That's what I think's happened in 1993.

Tim Horner: I think the wrestling business in 1993 took a downfall. Wrestling, if you've watched it for years, know that it goes in cycles. I think it's been on a downswing. Personally, it's a bright spot for Smoky Mountain Wrestling. When the others seemed to be going down, we were going up. So '93 as far as that goes, I think Smoky Mountain was on the rise while the big two were going on down.

Barry Horowitz: I think for a simple, total it in everything, it's just an up and down year. Definitely just an up and down year.

Ivan Koloff: As far as a big impact, to be honest with you, I haven't been watching the wrestling on WCW or WWF in the last couple of years very much because I'm always on the go so much myself. But you hear different rumors and the things that are going on. Of course anything when it comes to on the negative side as far as drugs or steroids, I guess that hurts the credibility of any business; when you hear football, hockey, baseball, or anything like that. It's not a good type of reaction for the sport. I really think that a couple of the incidents as far as with Vince McMahon up there, the publicity that came from that, I guess it's never good. I mean it's like he's guilty before he's even taken to court in the eyes of a lot of people. Especially the business is moreso rather than Vince is himself. I guess it was a negative thing from Arn and Sid Vicious over there getting into to it. Whether it's drug related or what as far as steroids, it's still not good for sure. Because any type of emotions when they're brought up should be kept to an intelligent settlement rather than something where it gets violent and people go to the hospital. I really feel that the wrestling, and I don't know why they've waited so long to even incorporate themselves with more or less farm teams. Like somewhat with the WWF and WCW trying to do it with Smoky Mountain. I saw it four years when I left the WCW that they should have something like that. Because it's hard to change the format of wrestling altogether since Ted Turner bought out the NWA. It seems like going after revenue of pay-per-views and specials has really hurt the attendance at buildings, because everybody can sit at home and watch the important stuff now, supposedly. Whereas I think the excitement of a sport is really there live, whether on the sideline or at the ringside. That's where I think a lot of the excitement of wrestling has been taken away, where taking its place is the hype and the Hollywood type of atmosphere. I don't really think it should have so much to do with it. It's the idea that wrestling back dates many hundreds, thousands of years. To me it's an exchange of different holds and counters and who can end up on top out of those, to pin a guy or make him submit. What they're doing now is more acrobatic and a lot of p.r. to promote that.

Killer Kowalski: I don't watch television. All I just do is run wrestling shows, which have all done very well. I have success with that. All I can say is wrestling has always been a good business for me. No negativity, except some of the assholes in the business.

Jerry Lawler: I just think that probably we're looking at a business that somebody like myself who's been in it for twenty-three years realizes it is a very cyclical business. It has peaks and valleys, and it's probably as in any business. I think a lot of the fans don't realize this. I think a lot of the people that saw the good times in probably in the late 80s, and '85 and '86 was when it was just really tremendous, and then of course with the big influx of cable and all of the world wide attention that wrestling got in the late 80s and early 90s, I think everybody thought that that was the first time wrestling has ever been that hot. But that's not the case. Wrestling's been on network television in the past. It gets hot and cold, and the public's appetite for anything gets satisfied if it's fed enough of it. I think wrestling in general is going through the cycle right now of suffering from a little bit of overexposure. That will happen with anything. Just like football, the National Football League talking about suffering from overexposure. Of course Major League Baseball, all of those. They talk about in their TV contracts they want to give more games to TV to get more money, generate more revenue. By the same token, they realize that the more they expose the product the less demand there will be for it at the gates. Everybody tries to walk that fine line, and wrestling is a little bit more at the mercy of TV than the NFL or Major League Baseball in the fact that it's readily available to TV and it was put on television to such an extent that I think the people just sort of got their fill of it for a while. But it'll come back, and it fixes itself. When people see so much of it, the demand decreases. When the demand decreases, the amount of shows on television would decrease. Once that happens, then the demand will increase again. It'll just go in cycles. I don't think 1993 specifically or anything that happened in the business had any major affect one way or the other. I think it's just the natural progression of things. It's sort of like, nature takes care of its own. Well, the wrestling business has done that certainly as long as I've been it, twenty-three years. And I'm sure it was that way long before I was there.

Mark Madden: In terms of Japan, all that can be said about them is they like diametrically opposed to what happened in the U.S., in that almost every promotion over there was very successful. They know how to promote. They work series'. They know how to have matches that not only have athletic intrigue, but emotional intrigue, and they've varied the styles of their promotion enough. Whereas two major promotions are going nowhere over here, a number of major promotions are doing well over there. As far as over here is concerned, the state of the business I don't believe since I've been following it has been any lower. Both companies are pushing what is basically an inferior in ring product. With in fact the World Wrestling Federation's in ring product perhaps being slightly superior to WCW's at this point. Which I never thought I'd hear myself say. In terms of promotion, the WWF has somewhat creative booking but no one to build around. WCW has people to build around but no one to book. I actually believe that the public perception of wrestling at this point is totally gone as far it could ever be, because not only does no one take the "sport" seriously, but no one even takes the premise on which it's based seriously. For example, no one even makes a premise of it being real. Which I know they would sound stupid if they did, but I enjoyed it more when they did, when I was a kid. Of course, I enjoyed being a kid more than I do being thirty-two, that's for sure. Also the fact that there have been so many scandals and things that have tainted business, in terms of showing the public that the people who are involved in this business are just basically not good people. From McMahon's steroid allegations to Lawler's rape charges, you name it. To Hogan lying on national TV. The public has been exposed endlessly to the fact that basically a bunch of scumbags are involved in the wrestling business. That has been certainly a downward turn for the two major promotions. With WWF I expect this year will be the beginning of the end for them. I think once Vince goes to jail, their days are numbered. I mean that very sincere, assuming Vince does go to jail--I read somewhere in the Constitution you have to be innocent until proven quilty. In WCW's case, they have a bottomless pit of money. It doesn't matter if they're good, bad, or indifferent. They're almost like a traveling circus. I mean, good show, bad show, you just pull up stakes and go to the next town the next night. It doesn't matter how many people showed up or not. In terms of smaller promotions, Cornette obviously made an initial impact, but certainly his fan interest has leveled off. I think if Jim can make his promotion a little more diverse, by that I mean to use different styles rather than just that straight ahead Memphis brawling style all the time, he could certainly pick up his attendance. Plus, I think he needs to broaden his horizons a little bit. By that I mean perhaps work with Jerry Lawler in Tennessee. Which leads to my next evaluation. Unless Jim Cornette does work with USWA, I think the USWA's days are definitely numbered. Without any help from New York, they're really even hurting for bodies at this point and they just don't have enough people that are stupid enough to work full-time for that kind of money on a consistent basis. So without Cornette's involvement, the USWA's in trouble. Smoky Mountain is a solid regional promotion. Paul E. Dangerously has done a good job with ECW. As far as he and Jim Crockett going nationally, I'm tired of hearing about the labor pains, I'd like to see the baby. All we hear about it is this promotion's going to go national, but it shows no signs of really doing so. I think if it ever does, if they ever have the wherewithal to get off the ground, I think they'll do fine. I think Paul E.'s the most creative young mind in the business. He's a little bit of a loose cannon, but I think they definitely have a chance to succeed. Perhaps not on a national basis, but in terms of like on a late night cable TV style sporadic house show basis.

Dave Meltzer: I think 1993 was more of a holding pattern. It was kind of a year we all expected something to happen. WWF, if you really get right down to it, has started at a low level. With the exception of the success of *Monday Night Raw*, there were a couple of times it looked like they were going to break out and do something good, but it never seemed to materialize. They had a lot of angles like the Lex Luger thing that everybody thought was going to really do good, but then as it turned out they didn't go for it. So they were in a holding pattern all year long kind of with that thought of the indictment over them, and then the indictment came. Whatever's going to happen from that obviously won't happen till next year. WCW, I just think had a terrible year. For everything they did good, they did five things bad. I think that they took a lot of steps backwards. They took a few steps forward towards the end of the year, but I don't think it negates how many fans they ran off as the year went. I just thought they had a pretty bad year. Independents, USWA did pretty well with the WWF connection. I think they worked that about as well as they could. But now they're in a situation where it isn't there and now they're having a lot of trouble. Smoky Mountain kind of treaded water all year too. They did a lot of really good booking things and a lot of really creative things, but when you compare the crowds they're getting now with the same time a year ago, it's pretty much the same. So I can't say they really improved. So overall I'd say the business treaded water, but for WCW it was kind of like sinking. The only other key thing was with the Triple-A coming in, and they did huge business. But I don't believe it will ever be an impact thing even though it may actually outdraw everybody. It still won't have impact because people won't acknowledge it.

Nailz: I don't think it was a very successful year because I think that wrestling is losing its popularity. I don't really know why. I couldn't put it down to just one specific reason. I think the people are tired of watching what they have been seeing. I don't watch much wrestling myself, but the people are not going to the matches like they used to go to them.

Matt Osborne: I think 1993 was a starting of a transformation, like a big change as far as who dominates the wrestling world and who is going to dominate it in the next decade, I believe. I think WWF obviously has dominated for the last ten years, but I think it's on the verge of changing. I think the WCW is going to dominate in the next few years. I think it's going that way right now.

Sabu: It's impacted me because now everybody wants to use me. Before nobody gave a shit. I worked for free a lot of times. The only way I got for Dennis Coralluzzo to know me is I flew myself out there a couple times. I paid for my own flight just to work. I've always worked this hard. My work habit has never changed ever since I've started, so it can't be (that I'm now getting booked) because I'm working harder because I've always worked hard. It's just maybe now I have more experience. But I've been experienced for a long time, it's just that nobody gave me a chance.

Tito Santana: I don't really have much of an opinion that I want to express. There has been so much negativity that I don't really want to express any of that.

Kevin Sullivan: I think it was a positive year. I'm not a negative person so I think things are positive. I think we saw ECW coming along very strong. I think we saw Cornette's organization continue on. This is his second year, doing very well. I guess the Los Angeles thing with this Mexican group, Triple-A, has proved an innovative movement for the wrestling business. I prefer always to think positive. I try never to think negative, but of course you're going to have negativity. The business was positive for a long time. There's some things that happened that have been negative. The business will always continue. It's like baseball. Baseball continued after Babe Ruth. The business will continue after all of us.

Nikolai Volkoff: None. I think 1993 was one of the worst years I have ever been in the wrestling business. There's too many in the business that don't know what they're doing, including WWF. When you see around, like ten years or maybe less than that, when you had wrestling running every night in different territories and the crowds were pretty good, doing sellouts or close to sellouts. Today, houses are just not there. Some houses are good, but they have to work very hard to sell those tickets. I sometimes see the small promotions even have more people than the big promotions. What I have to say is that, something is wrong.

What is your reaction to the current situation involving Vince McMahon and his company, and how it affects the wrestling business?

Bill Apter: I hate to see it happen, okay. I hope it's not true. But we obviously will have to leave that up to a judge and a jury to decide. So far most of the advertisers haven't dropped out, so I don't think it's hurting it in that way. Whether or not it's hurting in the eyes of the general public, for example if somebody tells their child not to watch it because this is going on, I don't think that verdict is in yet either. I think even if there's a conviction, even if Vince McMahon winds up going to jail, and again, I hope that does not happen, I think his company is structured well enough that they will continue. But they will be missing his genius. No matter what you say about the guy, in terms of a lot of wrestlers don't like what he did, he's the guy that put wrestling on the map.

John Arezzi: It can only have a negative effect on the business. There is not going to be anything positive coming out of it at all, especially if there is a trial that is going to open up lots of information that is unheard of to the casual fan. Will the WWF crumble? That remains to be seen. It all depends on how dirty it gets. If there is a trial.

Chris Benoit: There is a lot of bad publicity going around, and any bad publicity isn't good. It's really hard for the average wrestling fan. They've only heard one angle. All they're hearing is steroid abuse. But it's hard for them to understand what it's like on the road almost 300 days a year. I'm not condoning steroid abuse, but you really can't look at it through tunnel vision. You have to see the whole focus to accept it. It's definitely not good for the business. I can't really say anything on Vince because I've never worked for him and I wasn't there when all that happened. I don't condone it, but I don't want to knock anyone because I wasn't around when all that went down. I don't like to knock anyone unless I was there and saw what happened because it's easy for anyone to say Vince McMahon is a shithead and that he did do that. But really and truly, for anyone to say that that doesn't know him or has never worked for him, I don't think it would be right. But it's not good because it's bad publicity. It's definitely not good for the wrestling business.

Steve Beverly: I think it's tragic because it wasn't necessary. Maybe the people in charge, McMahon and his executives, felt they had to build a larger than life comic book type situation to approach a national audience and to make the merchandising. But I think he still could have done that with characterizations. Without getting involved in if indeed this is proven to be a direct link to Vince, which we have to be very careful about that until the court says so, it's an accusation. But it wasn't necessary. I think unfortunately there is a potential of catostrophic results to this industry that some people who have been veterans in it are worried about it. I tend to come down on the side of Terry Funk, that if the wrestling industry itself doesn't clean itself up, then it really is headed to plunge into quicksand. These people are not invincible, and that's not meant as a pun whatsoever, and when you are dealing with a court system that right now is pointing a heavy finger at drug abuse, that includes steroid abuse, If you raise people's expectations and you tailor your product to kids and then you abuse that power, then ultimately you pay a price. Is that price going to be the disillusion of the World Wrestling Federation? I probably doubt it. But will it ever be back to the level it was in the mid 80s after? Absolutely not. I still believe that it's going to probably be primarily a made-for-TV sport with your major shows having emphasis in the arenas, but the rest of it going to be almost along the level of American Gladiators or that type of programming that is a studio sport. I would not be at all surprised to see some major changes as far as how the television stations begin to look at it because I think you have to consider the fact that if this thing goes to trial and McMahon continues to be the focus of a constant amount of major negative publicity, one has to ask the question, "Will the advertisers and will the television stations stay with him?" I think the advertisers are going to be a bigger key to that than anybody else because if his national advertisers--and they tend to run, and we've seen it with Michael Jackson and Burt Reynolds with the Florida Orange Juice, at the drop of any hint of controversy. Does the Americain Dairy Association want to stay around and say "Milk it does a body good," if a guy, whether he's convicted or not, if he's in the shroud of darkness? I think that's the even bigger factor. The economic question. That can only be answered the closer this thing comes to trial.

Tully Blanchard: Anytime that you shake the foundation of any company, it affects the business. Anything that happens to Vince McMahon affects the WWF. He's the braintrust. He's the television brain. He's the inspiration. He's everything; announcer on down. So anything that affects him, affects their business. It affects the business. It's a poor message. That's the message that professional wrestling is emitting. It's not a good image. What can you say other than the fact that it's not a good image? It's not good for your children to be influenced by people like that. That's one of the things that I talk about. I heard Lex Luger say that he was a cartoon hero. Well, they're trying to create themselves or Vince is trying to create or Turner Broadcasting is trying to create cartoon heroes for the children so that they can sell novelties and so they get the kids to bring their parents to the arenas, so that they can make money and run a business. That's I guess the way business is. But how do you do it? You do it through manipulation. You do through influencing. You do it through deceitfulness. I mean that's just the nature of that business. Deception. I was very good at it when I was in it. I know it pretty well, second generation. You've got to call a spade a spade. You can whitewash and paint it and Vince McMahon says, "It's not a sport. I don't know what you call it," he's been quoting as saying in interviews. Maybe he doesn't know what it is, and he's let it run out of control. That's one of the things that God delivered me from. The true reason why this business is taking such a plummet is because God is coming against it. You just can't have an influence on children. The Bible says that it is better for you to put a millstone around your neck and jump off into the water rather than to harm a child. These people's target are the children. Because if they get the children, children are going to influence their parents to come spend their money. They enter the families of America in a negative fashion. From skeleton guys to mortician guys to whatever else. And the trouble that our country is suffering under violence. What is professional wrestling other than violence? Whether you think it's real or not, it portrays violence. So how can that be good. God is crumbling the wrestling business just like he's crumbling this country because it does not promote God. Our country was established promoting God 200 years ago. Now we scoff at God and we mock God. The Bible says that God will not be mocked. Jesus Christ is the one that you can't talk about in school and the Bible is what you can't read in school. That's what they're trying to take away from the kids. In the last thirty years, look at how much our country has plummeted since we've taken prayer out of public school. Wrestling is so insignificant to the whole spectrum of what's going on that it's not even worth talking about hardly. God is real. There's a supernatural power that is crumbling this world. Because the world has turned away from the most high God, the only true and living God, and gone to other things from money to other Gods. He's going to crumble the whole bunch of them. You look at the problems that this country has, and you just filter it in any smaller thing that you want. I don't think that wrestling will ever disappear, but it certainly is regaining the social stigma that it had back in the 60s and the 70s that it seemed to lose in the 80s. I mean it was kind of chic, it was kind of vogue in the 80s. The yuppies got into wrestling because it was people that took pride in their performances doing things. Now it's a bunch of people that have never had to pay the price to learn their craft, and they're just stuck out there.

Chris Candito: I think that has gotten blown out of proportion, when I get an Observer in the mail and the entire thing's about this ridiculous situation. In my personal opinion, I really don't think that anything was really done wrong, but I guess it was against the law. I don't really think it's going to have that much of an impact, as I heard some new law was just passed where you can't seize property that was involved in drug dealing. So I guess that they can't seize Titan Towers. But if they did and the company now had to run out of basement, which I guess Smoky Mountain proves you can be successful running out of a small office, then I guess maybe it won't be that big of a money company. Maybe we'll see a few more independents flourishing. Maybe some territories will be able to open up. But it's just too much to speculate. I don't think really anything big is going to happen from it all. I think it may just be a very large fine that may hurt Vince McMahon's wallet, but I don't think he'll go to jail. I don't think they're going to take the office building.

Dennis Coralluzzo: I don't think it will affect the wrestling business because all the publicity about it hasn't really been national publicity. I never felt that steroids had an effect on the wrestling business other other than steroids making big monster stars out of some guys. The steroid thing will affect Vince McMahon and his company, and it's going to effect the fans in a way by not being able to see him anymore if they take his company from him. But other than that, I don't think the fans give a shit about steroids.

Paul Dangerously: My reaction is that anytime anyone has a federal indictment levied against them, they have a fight on their hands. But Vince McMahon is a fighter. Since I've never worked there, I have no idea about particulars in the case. Everybody has their own opinion, but I think the only people that know the true facts are Vince McMahon and the people directly involved within the situation. It all depends on what the outcome is. If the government brings Vince to trial and there is a conviction levied against Vince McMahon which takes Titan Towers away, I think the WWF is in grave danger. If he beats this, the guy might become untouchable. But then again if he beats it, will people sit there and say, "Hey, he got away with it," or will they say, "Hey, he's an innocent man." Right now we're in the late stages of 1993 and this is a question that can't be answered because there are variables that have not been decided upon yet. There are cards yet to be played and that won't be played until the middle of 1994. So I mean it's way too early to call the shot.

Paul Diamond: It could be good, I guess, because he's had the monopoly in a way for a long time. Just like what I told you about the other tours being canceled because of him. So maybe it's time that we go back to small areas and giving guys a chance to work regionally. He got it for the last ten years, monopolized it with all the TVs and all the best towns. Maybe it's time to kind of turn back the clock a little bit.

Shane Douglas: It's real unfortunate. It's hard to imagine building an empire like that and then having it slip away. But if you play with fire, you get burned by fire, I guess. As far as the impact on the sport, I think only time can tell that. I've got no idea. I think it's unfortunate for everybody involved.

Jim Duggan: I can't really understand why they're going after Vince so hard. As if the president of IBM and his employees were convicted or accused of doing wrongdoings, they wouldn't go after the president of the organization. I think Vince has just got somebody in the government mad at him and they're just trying to get him anyway they can. Personally, I have no animosity against Vince and I enjoyed working for him, and I wish him the best of luck. I think the business was taking a down-turn anyway. I think it's going to take a toll on it, but wrestling survived bigger scandals than this. I think the WWF is definitely on a downswing and the WCW will be the organization of the future in this country.

Bill Eadie: I'm not at liberty to talk about that right now. I'm involved in litigation myself. At some other date I may.

Terry Funk: Probably very little, because the business can't go down much more than it is right now or else it won't exist. What impact will it have on the world if he is convicted? A tremendous impact. Because if he is convicted and proven guilty of knowingly using athletes that are using steroids to enhance his box office and take some of his possessions from him, that leaves the world of professional football and all your professional sports in a very different situation where we might actually see professional sports become steroid-free out of necessity for those people who are owners to not lose the things that they have accumulated over a period of years.

Tod Gordon: I don't think it's going to impact on the wrestling industry per se the way a lot of people think it might. I feel very sorry that anyone would have to go through the kind of public scrutiny that they are going to have to go through. But unfortunately, when you are in the public eye, as I have learned from different walks of life, then you are indeed opening yourself up to public scrutiny.

Johnny Gunn: They're in the news for all the wrong reasons. For the average guy on the street, that's all they're going to hear about. Nothing they're doing in the ring, it's just what they're doing in court. First of all, it's going to drawn out a long time. They're not going to get Vince for nearly anything what it looks like now. The main charge against him is conspiracy to sell steroids, which he didn't do. I'm sure he had the doctor that made the steroids available to the guys, but Vince has never handled them himself. That's their main deal, and once he gets over that he'll be fine.

Bruce Hart: I think the perception or the damage that it would have caused has already been done because it's almost been overkilled. I find it hard to believe that he would be guilty of those things because you'd think he would be a lot smarter than that. I don't think he needed to do that given all of his other sources of income. I don't think it should be used as an excuse for the shortcomings of the business. I wouldn't see a football owner having the team taken away from him because some of his athletes were using roids, in case the whole NFL would be out.

Honky Tonk Man: It's going to have an effect on the wrestling business simply because there's going to be television stations that are going to be a little bit leery now of dealing with the wrestling product. I think Vince is going to lose some television stations this coming year. When new contracts come up, some of the stations are probably going to drop him. Some of the merchandising people that have products out on the market are probably going to drop the wrestling items. It's going to have the old trickle down theory. Even though it doesn't involve the WCW, indirectly it will involve them because they have merchandise and things like that on the market. Even now, I don't see any of the wrestling items in Wal-Mart stores anymore. You just don't see them anymore. When these big chains stop buying from the toy companies because of the bad publicity or the toy merchandising manufacturers back off of the contracts because of what happened to Vince, it will definitely effect the business. If this thing goes any further and Vince ends up being convicted on the charges and what the government's looking at and what they want to do to them, then they quite possibly will Titan Sports down. Yes, that will definitely affect the wrestling world.

Tim Horner: Anytime there's press on wrestling, good or bad, it affects wrestling, even if it's not your company. A lot of people see wrestling and they just put us all in one category. So if they get bad press, it affects everybody. I think Vince will eventually get what's coming to him.

Barry Horowitz: I just mostly hear things, and that's about it. I really don't even have a comment about that. I don't know. I think it has affected it a little bit. I don't have enough sayso or any input really to comment on it, to be honest with you.

Ivan Koloff: I don't know what happened in the past as far as Vince McMahon is concerned in that territory. I'm sure things were maybe a little bit lax at one time and not controlled properly, which a lot of companies have that problem. But I believe that Vince McMahon today and has been for the last several years very conscious of the drug situation. Even though he wanted his wrestlers to produce, to be big or whatever, I don't think he advocated the idea of them using the steroids or encouraging that. If he took some personally, to me, that's his business. As far as pushing to the other guys and telling them they had to, I don't really believe that. Because I wrestled up there several times and nobody ever approached me and said, "You better stay big or you're not wrestling here," or "You better take steroids." Nobody ever said that to me. I think anybody that says that is going on there, I really don't believe it.

Killer Kowalski: People look at him as an individual, and they 'on't blame wrestling itself for it. People still come to wrestling shows for the entertainment part of it. What's happening to Vince McMahon has nothing to do with the sport at all or the entertainment part of it. You'll find that happens in baseball. If someone involved in baseball does the wrong thing, it doesn't hurt the sport itself or their entertainment value of it. Every sport has had the same thing and it hasn't hurt the sport itself. Just certain individuals involved in it are the ones that are paying for it, through trials or whatever it is.

Jerry Lawler: I don't think the fans care one way or the other about that. I don't think it will affect it as far as fan support or attendance at the matches. I don't think it will have anything to do with it. The talk of steroids has been so blown out of proportion. I just think that the average fan doesn't care about steroids. They don't care if a wrestler uses steroids or if a football player uses steroids or if a runner uses steroids. They know that it's a fact of life and that some guys have and some guys haven't. I don't think they really care. It's not something that is affecting them, so I don't think the people worry about that. I think also for them to do a nineteen month long investigation and then the only thing they can come up with on Vince is something like this, I think that shows that it was basically a witch hunt. Somebody was out to get him for something, and if this was all they could come up with, I think it's pretty weak.

Mark Madden: I think in terms of how it affects the business, it's just another scandal and another black eye in a business that has had so many black eyes it looks like a ninety-year-old fighter. I don't think it will cause a negative down-turn in the perception of the business. However if Vince is convicted and does go to prison, as I said, it will eventually be the end of the WWF. I don't think that anyone left there is qualified to run the business from the level. If Vince does get convicted, he'll be in prison trying to run things. Which I don't think he'll successfully be able to do due to the obvious constraints. So I think that will be the effect, just on the WWF itself if Vince is convicted. As far as my opinion on whether he's guilty or innocent, I don't have one. Certainly the American judicial system is far more qualified to determine that than I am. I go by the premise that you're innocent until proven guilty. Although, boy, to the naked eye he looks guilty as hell. Look at Federal Express, when you absolutely, positively have to commit a felony overnight. I mean those receipts don't lie. I really think that in terms of him being guilty or innocent, I would tend to think the former. But there's no way you can say that because a judge and jury will decide, assuming it comes to that. I think the most amusing thing about the whole situation is, I think it's going to end up being Hulk versus Vince in court. I think that will just be hilarious. Two of the people with the lowest moral scruples in the history of this business, just battling to save each other's tattered reputations is a scream. I can't wait for it. I think that will be the upshot of the whole thing.

Dave Meltzer: We're kind of in a holding patter on that too. There's nothing that came out in the indictments that anyone who followed wrestling for the most part didn't know most of. I can't say all of, on the part of distribution. I really hadn't heard a lot of people say he distributed. He didn't distribute on a wide basis if he did distribute. As far the company being built on this, that stuff people have been saying since 1985 anyway. It's just now all of a sudden the government says it too, and they can get in trouble for it. The only thing to say is, we have to wait until the trial and see how good a case the government has and how good a case Vince has, and whatever the result is, I guess that will be the real impact. As far as sponsors and all that, I think that everyone is sitting there waiting. I don't think anyone's going to make any moves right now. But I think everyone's aware that it is there, also.

Nailz: It's too bad that it had to happen because I think that it puts a negative effect towards our business, as being a professional wrestler. I think that Vince McMahon used professional wrestling as a sport to make a lot of money and didn't care what happened to the sport after he pirated it and went throught it and made a ton of money for himself, and then ruined it for the wrestlers who still try to make a living off the sport. Because the way it is now, it's hard to make a living. There's not a lot of places you can go work. Like I said, it's lost popularity. In my opinion, Vince McMahon just ruined wrestling for the wrestlers and made it great for his corporation and his company, and himself, and his family. But as far as for the wrestlers, it's not as good as it could be.

Matt Osborne: I think it doesn't help the wrestling business at all. But I think Vince McMahon is being singled out, no matter what anybody thinks about him or feels about him personally. I think that he's being singled out by the government because he's an entrepreneur and he's very successful and he makes mega dollars. I think that a lot of guys have a lot of animosity towards him because they believe that once their run in finished and their life in the business is over, they haven't managed their money properly, and they think that the wrestling business owes them a living. Which is wrong, and they take shots at Vince McMahon because he's the man that controls. No matter what he says, right or wrong, it's right because it's his business and he can do what he wants. He hasn't been fair with a lot of people, but that's his decision to make. I think this thing with him already has shown that it has an effect on it and it's hurt the business. I think that it will all blow over. Nobody's perfect, everybody makes mistakes. Hey, when Vince McMahon was involved with the steroids, it wasn't a big deal. When it did become a big deal and it was a big issue in the press as far as kids go, I think then they look back and then they want to say, "He was doing this, this, and this." It was irrelevant because it was no big deal. I know many doctors that were prescribing steroids to different guys. It's just too bad that it got abused. I really believe that steroids can really help you, but I think they're just too easily abused. Too much of anything's not good for you. But I believe that steroids used in sports, given certain conditions, can really benefit you. It helps you recover faster from matches, with your joints. I've seen too many guys abuse it. I never abused it myself. I have used them, but I just never really got into them that much. As far as Vince goes, I think he's a hell of a guy. I think he's a genius and I think he's real creative. I think that he's being singled out for many reasons. I think that it will pass. Look at the guys up there at the WWF now. They're not like they were. He's really cracked down on the steroids. Because he has to, for one. For two, they're abused. It's an abused thing. It's just like anything.

Sabu: I really don't care either way if he goes to jail because I don't know him, really. But I don't want to see the WWF go under. I don't think it should affect them too much. I'm not really following what's going on with it that much, other than basically he's getting in trouble for steroids. I'm glad the steroids are getting cut out of the picture. That's good because it doesn't put any pressure on me about getting bigger. I want to get bigger, but if they like me the way I am, there's no point in it. The only reason they like me the way I am now is because of the steroid thing going on. I thought it (steroids in wrestling) was good at first because it made everybody look better. But then they were choosing the better look over the better worker, instead of trying to find both. Now I think the wrestlers will be concentrating more on their wrestling talent than their physique so much. Physique is important, but it's no more important than your talent. I think the talent is a little bit more important than your physique, but they both go hand in hand. What could have happened with me this year is, steroids are out, so maybe the people are giving me a second look because they're not looking for a giant guy.

Tito Santana: Me being part of the WWF for so many years, I believe that in a lot of people's eyes Vince is guilty right now without even having a chance to prove himself whether he's guilty or innocent. I was there, and everything that he's been accused of, I was not aware of. But there's a lot that I don't know that was going on, also. So I can't say either way, but I just don't think that it's fair. Personally, I don't have too many negative things to say about Vince. To me, he was fair. But it's just like Michael Jackson. He's guilty right now and he has to prove himself innocent now. I think Vince has been getting hints for quite a while now, and I don't think it's fair.

Kevin Sullivan: To tell you the honest to God truth, I've never really kept up with the WWF because I don't work there. I know that in the early 80s they made the business. I haven't followed the exploits of Vince McMahon. I haven't followed the exploits of any of the guys because it really doesn't pertain to me. I try not to get influenced about rumors, allegations, and accusations because there's more than two sides to the story. There's twenty sides to the story... The truth of the matter is, I don't have time to sit through that. I just know what I have to do in my life and my professional life. I don't know how (it effects wrestling) when you are bombarded by information. We have a mentality now of twelve seconds to respond to that information. That's what the news throws up, a twelve second news flash. What is news and really serious to the people that follow wrestling is not serious to the general public. They're bombarded by slayings. They're bombarded by muggings, train murders, train wrecks, plane wrecks, Somalia, hunger. I mean, let's put this all in perspective. People take this *way* out of proportion. This is not world hunger. This is not an AIDS epidemic. It's just wrestling.

Nikolai Volkoff: I don't think that Vince McMahon is going to be found guilty anyway, because I don't think he did anything wrong. I don't think he did anything wrong because most of the guys that took steroids, they took steroids before they came to Vince. I never took steroids in my life. I never took any drugs. But lots of people did. I think he's just a scapegoat. I think the only thing that affects the business is the guys who are in it. If they do the right stuff and correct stuff, they're going to do good. If they don't do the right stuff, they're not going to do good.

What changes do you think need to be made in the wrestling business in 1994 to improve the product and the overall health of the industry?

Bill Apter: I think the organizations have to stop trying to imitate or fight WWF. A lot of the independent promoters will call here lots of times and say, "I'm going to get McMahon. I'm going to do this with McMahon," etc. Forget it. Keep an eye on it, it does exist. But make your product different, not looking like an imitation of it. Somewhere out there there's another superstar sitting in a wrestling school or sitting in a gym who can do everything that Hogan did to wrestling. Somebody has got to go out there with a new idea and find this guy.

John Arezzi: I really feel that the business here in the States should look towards the international marketplace to make things interesting again for the fans. I mean that the promotions should be going out there scoping world wide, scoping the best talent from Mexico, the best talent from Japan, and the best talent here in the States. I really feel that the year 1994 is going to see more independents starting to spring up. There will be a lot of competition out there, but I think that's going to be good for the overall state of the business.

Chris Benoit: I think the big problem now is that there's just no real small territories, and it's really hard for anyone that's coming into this business to find somewhere where they're going to work six to seven nights a week, which is what you really need to be able to develop. A lot of these guys are coming in and going in to work for one of the major companies right away, and they really haven't spent that time on the road to sharpen their skills. I think you really need that. I was really fortunate to be one of the last guys around to have that opportunity with the Calgary territory. They still run Smoky Mountain in Tennessee, which is great. But it seems like guys that I talk to that were around fifteen years ago say that there were fifteen territories to go to. I'd really like to see a lot of smaller operations and territories open up for new guys coming in to develop. I think that would really help the business.

Steve Beverly: I think the ultimate aspect of this that has to happen is wrestling does have to, in particular for Turner's organization, they have to pull out of the orient business. If they're going to go to an element of multiple pay-per-views at the level that they did this year, they cannot expect people to go to the arenas and expect to see something special, because it won't be. I think they are already making strong evolutions doing that because some of the new contracts they are offering to people is including a weekly guarantee just to come up and do TV, which I think probably is the smart philosophy to do. They'll eliminate the draining travel costs, the rent on the arenas, and the wear and tear on the wrestlers' bodies trying to maintain even the illusion, which is not much of one anymore, of being a national promotion. The other thing that I think has to be done to improve it that will not be done beyond a shadow of a doubt, there needs to dramatically be a cut back in the number of television shows that are nationally distributed. We've been saying this for four or five years, and I think again more is less. You'll typically see ratings for the Saturday night edition of World Championship Wrestling will be higher when there's no Sunday Main Event. You'll typically see that if there is a pre-emption on one of the WWF shows that they'll go to the other flagship show in greater numbers just to get their weekly dosage. I think that sends a message to these companies. But the reason it won't be done is because they've got to get the gross rating points, the collective rating points for all of these shows, to sell to these national advertisers. So they're not going to cut back on these things because they're locked into the advertising medium that forces them to maintain them. If there's a third thing that I think honestly needs to be done, I truly believe that there has to be a tremendous internal self-examination in the industry. Terry Funk is absolutely right, you've got too many executives from the Turner standpoint that are just simply relying on the advice of others because they're not skilled in wrestling. These people have got to get involved in it and learn it enough to recognize that when you've got an incident in England where you end up with near death of two wrestlers, they've got to understand that when you've got a problem that has lead to major national headlines and a court, a case that's going to probably have major national publicity, that the focus could squarely be on their company because right now they tend to be the more guilty party as far as having inflated-sized wrestlers. There has to be just a cleansing inside of the attitude. I think Jim Herd probably put it right on the head, there has to be a renewing of respect for the wrestling fan and what he or she is willing to put up with. They will watch the TV in excessable amount of numbers, but they will not go pay the big bucks except for the very special shows like the Royal Rumble or the Survivor Series. They're just not going to pay the bucks like they used to. Consequently, I think that if these people do not look inwardly and say they've got to have a moral clean up of these companies as well as a financial clean up, and that they've got to get back to the business of having some respect for the people who watch their shows and buy their tickets, if they don't do that I think that ultimately they'll seal their own fate in that regard. Vince has certainly had to look somewhat inwardly at the way he conducts business and the image that he maintains because there are some things he does not do on TV now that he probably would have taken a lot more tasteful risks in the past. There is no written law or guarantee or assurance that wrestling has to be around forever. That is the one thing that I think a lot of these people forget. There's no God-given right that wrestling has to be here. If they don't wake up and recognize that it's not necessarily going to be there for them to serve, who's to blame but themselves. It's way beyond the point of trying to make excuses now as they were at one point, that the sheets were killing the business. These problems go way, way, way, way beyond that.

Tully Blanchard: You could change it on all fronts. We don't have enough time to get into all the changes that could be made.

Chris Candito: I think the thing you would have said a couple years ago was for the WWF, which everybody walking the street basically just thinks of as wrestling, they don't realize that there's other things, is for them to kind of get out of the cartoon type of thing and get more serious. That was what everybody was saying a year ago. All the hardcore people really didn't like the WWF. In the last year they really have kind of, not totally, but really gone back to a more serious based product. WCW hopefully I think for the better of wrestling they'll just go out of business. (Tammy Fytch and Chris began arguing at this point, which caused him to lose his train of thought)! For the better of wrestling, things should just be run intelligently. Dennis Coralluzzo always says to me when I talk to him on the phone that I'm living in a utopia down here working for Smoky Mountain because there's still believability and it's still run intelligently with smart ideas. The reasons things are good down here, number one it's that we have a smart guy running it. But there's only one boss and what he says goes. We don't have some kind of a committee of a hundred people or any kind of a big office where there's a bunch of different guys trying to make decisions. I think sometimes in theory it might be good, with different ideas getting mixed together, but it doesn't always end up working because I guess the egos are just too big. I think you need to just have one boss. I think everybody could really take a lesson from taking a look down at how Smoky Mountain's being run. Some people might say, "You guys only draw 200 people sometimes, 300 people on the weekend shows." But I think that that's just a state of the business as much of anything. Especially since we're running primarily in an area where the land might be bigger, but the population really isn't that large. Like New

Jersey is six times smaller than Tennessee, but it has a population of nine times as much. So for the population base that we're running out of, I think we're doing pretty well. For everybody to get better, they could just take a look at what we're doing down here.

Dennis Coralluzzo: A lot less exposure of it. There's too many pay-per-views, there's too much TV. There's too much overexposure. It's killing it. Also the bigger companies have to get a better product and they have to start putting the fans back in the seats. Even though by them not doing business helps us, when they do better business it also helps us too. They have to be more realistic on a lot of their angles and just give something the fans want to see, and not what the promoters and the bookers want to see.

Paul Dangerously: This is an industry that is crying out for change. It has gone so far in one direction, it burned that direction out. It went then the complete opposite direction; some of it worked, some of it didn't. To say in my opinion where the wrestling business needs to go in 1994 is to tip my hand as to the formula that the people that I'm involved with and myself intend to utilize. I think the things that you need to see happen in 1994 is a different product than it has been presented in the past. Just as before 1983, they took wrestling as far as they could with that formula, and then they came in with a new formula in '83 and '84 and they marketed towards a different demographic. I think now in '94, wrestling has to be presented in a much different light because it's reached that next stage of evolution.

Paul Diamond: I don't think it's going to happen in '94, but I think we need to find some guys that could wrestle some of the guys with a little more experience and have the younger guys learn how to wrestle, and not just worry about being huge and having a gimmick. But being able to get over with the people and their ability to wrestle. I'm just talking about doing flips and this and that, because now there's guys getting started and all they want to do is these fancy things. Nobody knows how to do the basics and the psychology. So I think that's like a lost art, because there's very few guys that can still do that. We need to get a few more of them back in there before anything's going to improve; if we're going to have a good product, if we're going to have good matches. Which we don't right now.

Shane Douglas: We need to get rid of all the soap opera stuff and we need to start really getting back to the athletic side of it. "Sports entertainment" isn't cutting it. We have to get back to the roots and make it a sport. That's what the people want to see. Just watch a hockey game. The only two things that people jump out of their seats for is when there's a fight or there's a goal. So we have to get back to that same type of excitement. The people want to see the vicious side of wrestling. Unfortunately, it's going to mean that you're not going to be able to see people like Joe Blow's going out there and wrestling for twenty years. The Ric Flair's, their careers will never last that long because instead of going out and wrestling the same match every night for twenty years, they're going to have to go out and compete. That physical nature of the business will disallow people to spend that much time. The pay-per-view system, the first thing they need to do is cut back. To have a pay-per-view every three weeks is impossible. For the average American family out there, it's pretty tough to spend $30, $40 every three weeks for some wrestling matches, especially when they're bad wrestling matches, which is more times than not what we've been getting. If you look at the overall rating of the pay-per-views, all of them for the last year have been horrible. If you go to the Kmart and you buy something and you go there forty times and you keep buying it and it's expensive and you keep getting a horrible product, pretty soon you're going to stop buying it. That's what has happened with wrestling. They've been getting a horrible product and we've been taking advantage of the wrestling fans. I think the fans are sick of it. We've got to shake it back down to the very basics. The wrestlers themselves are no longer going to be able to make these $725,000 contracts because there's not that kind of money being drawn. It's going to be competition again. That's good.

Jim Duggan: I think what wrestling really needs is the small territories where young talent can go develop. There is no place now like there was years ago where you could go to Mid South, or Georgia Championship Wrestling, or Florida All-Star Wrestling, or the Von Erichs group, where you could learn your trade. Not only what's needed to be done in the ring, but also your interview material. I think now, it's showing. They bring guys up into the WWF and WCW and just thrust them into the spotlight with no experience. I think that's maybe one of the main reasons that the business is suffering. Because the talent has no place to develop.

Bill Eadie: I've watched it for a number of years. Unfortunately, we were discussing this not too long ago with a few friends of mine that are in the business, I don't think that the majority of the current young wrestlers have the basics that some of the other guys had before. It doesn't seem to be in the foundation. The psychology, the ring savvy, the ability to control a crowd; things like that take some time. It's not the situation where the guys don't have the ability to do it. It's just thrusting them into a position that I don't think a lot of them are ready to handle. Whereas we had the luxury a few years ago that you weren't pushed into that situation until your late twenties or thirties. Now with the transition and a lot of the older guys aren't there, they're trying to fill in the gaps. I don't think that the guys are ready to do it, to be honest with you. I think they will be, but unfortunately the first opinion is the long lasting one. These guys are put into a situation where they haven't gained the skills yet. It's not that they don't have the ability, they just haven't had the opportunity to mature.

Terry Funk: We have to pick up the pace. We have to change the formats of our TV shows. We have to get with the times. We have to produce a much better moving show than what we had in the past, as far as our television is concerned. I just think that in order for it to be successful we've got to work hard at it ourselves. We've got to have people that know what they do, know what to do, and know how to promote. Right now we don't even have that. We are kind of in a quagmire right now as far as promoters, as far as what we call a booker, a manipulator. I don't think that there's a valid manipulator or booker out there right now that's doing a good job of creating interesting matchups for the public. I think those are all big factors that we're having a problem with in this business right now. We better take a look at it. We better get after it. If we don't, we'll stay where we are. We will always exist, but we can't stay where we are. We need to move forward because we've backtracked for the last three years. Hopefully, we've come to the bottom rung on the ladder. It would be very difficult to go further down than what we are right now. Believe me, the scuzzy, crappy bullshit makes you want to run a finger down your throat and regurgitate the wrestling business, and start over. Because we have had more than our share of it. Somebody has to be responsible for it. And who I hold truly responsible for it are the wrestlers themselves. The promoters, yeah, but we've got to have some type of moral standards or at least, we better start looking for some real fast. I'm not trying to sound like a preacher, but everybody within the business better look at themselves and try to pick it up a little bit. Clean up their act. Do the right thing. You have to do the right thing for your business too. It's time to get all the shit out of it. Let's go, let's move down the road. That's what we have to do.

Tod Gordon: I think that the biggest change has already begun, which was the joining together of different organizations instead of treating each other like an enemy, in that the USWA and SMW have a working relationship with the WWF. I would like to see the ECW at some point have working relationships with other organizations. I'd like to see WCW steer its course in the right direction to get themselves back on track. Because I think from the way they're headed, it's not good for anybody in the business.

Johnny Gunn: It looks really negative right now. It's a shame because I've seen the business go sky high from '84 to say '90. I mean they really did well. Now it's just on a major decline. WCW, all they're doing are TVs and pay-per-views. They're cutting out all house shows because they just couldn't draw flies. They don't have an advertising budget for the road. So we'd be going to all these different towns with no people in the stands. Here's one of the top two organizations in the world and I wrestled many a show with fifteen, twenty people. It's a real disgrace. So now they're just going to run their TV and their pay-per-views. That doesn't do anything for the wrestlers unless they're on a quarantee, which they got rid of. I don't think '94 is going to change the business much. I think it's just going to go along the same lines it is right now. I hope for the better. I'm in a good spot right now. The east coast is the best area for independents. I'm happy about that. Other than that I don't see many other organizations picking up steam. Paul E.'s supposed to have this thing with Crockett, but I think that's a lot of talk. Even if it gets going I don't think it will be anywhere near what it is supposed to be. I look at it this way. If Turner can't do it with national TV exposure no matter who the booker is or who likes what's going on, Crockett's not going to do it with paying for everything out of his own pocket. It's the wrong time. So I think the year's going to center around what happens in court. It's a shame to say, but that's probably what it will be.

Bruce Hart: I think you have to get back to conventionality as far as getting heat and having the belts mean something. I think you have to let the heels get some heat and sustain it, and have a lot fewer switches and maybe have some person perhaps like Bret or Michaels or some guys who can actually work a bit, have the belt for a while and get it over. I think every time they turn around now if a guy doesn't increase ratings over night, they switch it. I think they have to induce some stability into the boys and some of the characters. I don't think they need ten or twelve matches on the house shows. I would give about five or six matches a night and have the boys work longer and develop better scripts and storylines in their matches. This crap where the matches are four or five minutes with parading and horse shit, you're kind of almost encouraging the wrestlers not to learn how to work. I don't think the fans get into those kinds of matches.

Honky Tonk Man: It's so hard now for a new guy that's coming into the business to have established himself with any credibility or with any drawing power other than just to be thrusted on a national scene all of a sudden. With the way the television and all these things are structured now, you don't have the time. I think what both companies are going to have to do is cut back on the television product--which I doubt will ever, ever happen--and take more time to build their stars. When I went into the WWF, I was on TV for three months before I was ever in an arena anywhere in America. It was three months of television and then I started going to the live events, and then it was three more months of television before they even did anything as far as any kind of an angle to see what you can possibly do. It wasn't all of a sudden you're in there, nobody knows who you are, it's your third week on TV, and they shoot a big angle with you, and you're a main event in Madison Square Garden. That's what's happened now, and until they can change that and bring these guys along much, much slower, the business is going to go downhill. Simply because they just don't have any recognizable characters anymore. Nobody is over. If you don't people over, they're not going to sell tickets. Nobody is interested in the product that they're putting out there right now.

Tim Horner: Wrestling needs to get back to the basics more like Smoky Mountain. They've taken wrestling away from the business. I think the contracts hurt the business. I think it took all the iniative out and nobody has any incentive to work hard and to draw crowds because they're going to get paid whether they do or not. I think that hurt the business a lot, because it used to be guys would work hard so they could get a chance to wrestle a Flair or a Hogan. So they knew if they wrestled a Flair or a Hogan, they were going to make more money. So you could work hard to be on their cards. Now they're paying guys whether they work or not. You've got guys working two or three times a month making $200,000 or $300,000 a year. There's no incentive. I think they need to put the incentive back in the business.

Barry Horowitz: In my opinion, stick to basic wrestling and push guys like myself. That's not an egotistical statement or anything, that's just being honest. Get back to basics and good workers. That's coming straight from my heart and mind. A business answer. Not an egotistical answer.

Ivan Koloff: I think the direction they're going in now with the WWF and WCW is a good, positive approach to it. Vince McMahon and I'm sure Ted Turner's organization is testing, and that's what needs to be done. If an athlete is not conscious enough to protect his body and take care of it, then definitely the head of the organizations should insist on rigid testing and such. I believe that they're doing that now because they're a lot of guys losing their contracts because of not passing the test. As far as the drugs and that are concerned, I think they're going in the right direction there. I guess anything can't happen overnight that's so serious. But I'd really like to see, if possible, the smaller areas be able to get more interest. I guess it would have to be more money pumped into it. This is why I thought that maybe the large organization would have farm teams, and get an area like what Crockett had down here before. Can you imagine the interest if you had several good wrestlers down here and you had a local TV and then once a month or once ever two months you had a big show that came into each city with three or four stars come in, even the champion come in and defend his title against the local champion. To me that would bring a lot of interest. I think the community would come out and support it in their town more and it would be back to the old way. I'd like to see it come around to that. I can just say, if the thing goes in cycles, I hope the cycle's coming around to that.

Killer Kowalski: The only thing that can help is to get some good guys out there who are dedicated to professional wrestling, not out there just to see how much money they can make off the suckers. Go out there and bust their ass. I did my whole career like that. If I stepped in the ring in some little dinky town that has twenty-five people out there or go to Madison Square Garden where there's 22,000 people, I did not perform any less. I gave 120% every time I stepped in that ring. I was known for that too. That's the way it was. That's the way every professional wrestler should be. Go out there just like it's your last match in your whole life. We'd be wrestling, and each time we came back, the crowd grew. We did it by going in that ring and working hard at it. Some of the guys today, they go in that ring, and they're actually laying down and picking their noses and scratching their balls or something, is the best match they can give. The people came there, they paid, they deserved our best. Contrary to whether we got paid or not. Some of the guys today, they don't give a damn about the people.

Jerry Lawler: All the promoters and everybody that's in wrestling would love for every arena to be full every night. But that's just not going to happen. Nobody books a card thinking that it won't draw. Everybody thinks they've done everything that they can to insure that this place will be sold out. But it just doesn't always happen. There's nobody that's got that "Midas touch" that can sellout every card they book. It's just going to be that way. I don't know if there's anything that anybody can do differently, other than I think maybe if a few more territories were to spring up where some new talent could be generated from. I think that is the major concern that I see. I think people should be concerned about the fact that, where is the new talent going to come from? I don't care who it is, if it's from old age, or if it's from the people getting tired of seeing them so long, even if they're a young person, there's got to be a new influx of new blood in the business. Even guys that are young like Dustin Rhodes or guys like that, if they're seen every week, week after week after week, after a while the people just want to see somebody different. The only thing I'm worried about is, where are these new and different guys going to come from? The WCW and the WWF, they're geared up into that high-powered operation to where they can't take guys and just train them in their organization. They have all superstars. So where are they going to come from? They've got to come from small territories like we have here or like it used to be, all around the country. These guys need to be able to get in there and wrestle some guys every night, and get some experience. That's the thing that I don't see that's out there other than us. If there were a few more places like that, it would help the business in general.

Mark Madden: WCW needs to become an all-TV promotion, which they bluffed recently about doing, and didn't. If they could become an all-TV promotion and cut down their roster of wrestlers in order to control costs and then put the money saved into really making sure the best people are involved with the promotion booking and taping and formatting of the product, I think that could be an awesome step in the right direction for WCW. Now obviously I'm just talking fantasy land here because there's no one in that company smart enough to even recognize that decision. That's the most important thing they could do. They could give a big time perception in terms of the infrequency of their events. It's always easier to sell out one event than it is ten. That pretty much speaks for itself. In terms of WWF, I don't know what their game plan is. That will be dictated by the trial. In terms of the actual product itself, you really never know what's going to work. All the crap that worked from '84 through '88, and it worked big time, I didn't like very much. I liked a lot of the drama of it. I certainly didn't like the actual non-athletic aspect of it because it certainly became almost totally non-athletic by the end. However, I sure would like to have the money from it. I don't think you can say there's a right way or wrong way of promoting. I think you can say there's many different ways of promoting and there's a right or wrong way of executing that particular style. In Jimmy Cornette's case, I don't particularly care for that Memphis style, that brawling style, every single week. However, he does it as well or better than anybody's ever done it. In terms of Triple-A and Mexico, I hate that Lucha style with a passion. However, they're doing that as well as anyone's ever done it, in terms of the promotion of it. So I don't think there's a right or wrong way for the business to turn, I just think it's a matter of having the right people in charge and the right concept of the style to turn it around. Actually, the style the WWF had between '84 and '86 where they were heavy on personalities and drama, and light on wrestling, could have lasted forever but they became almost non-existent on wrestling. It almost became a parody of itself. They went too far in making it like a dog and pony show. If they would have just kept the drama to the hilt without crossing over the boarderline into self-parody and almost a caricature of itself, it would have worked. But they didn't know when to stop. They were constantly bringing in wrestlers who were just all drama and what they thought was charisma, and no ability. Hogan early on was mostly personality, but he could work a little bit. Orndorff was the same way. They were higher on personality but could work enough to give an athletic show. Then they started bringing in guys who didn't want to work. Junkyard Dog. There's the epitome of it. A guy who at one time could work, then got convinced that he was all personality, gained about 4,000 pounds, and chose not to work hard. When guys have gimmicks like that that are totally ridiculous and embarrassing, they don't want to do anything. They just want to get the check. They figured they've suffered enough humiliation. Why work hard? So that was a style where they certainly failed a little bit.

Dave Meltzer: I think that the people who are running the business need to be more open-minded about new concepts, especially concepts that are working elsewhere. I think the idea that, "We want a guy to work like this because that's how everyone used to work before," I think that you've just got to throw those rules out the window. I think there's going to be more gimmickries. I think that's okay. I think they really need to improve the finishes. The small promotions pretty much need the gimmickry and the gimmicked finishes because they're catering to a very small select portion of the audience. So you can do weird things and you have to do weird things because those people want weird things. I think when you're talking about trying to appeal to the mainstream with your big promotions, I think that they would both--more WCW than WWF, because WWF's audience doesn't take results seriously to begin with--WCW if they're trying to sell results as being important, I think they're going to have to just have winners and losers like they do in Japan. The whole business in Japan turned around and exploded as soon as the people knew they weren't going to get screwed when they went to the house show. Every main event, every match, you've got a winner and you've got a loser. You don't know who's going to win and you don't know who's going to lose, and you do know you're not going to be insulted with a finish. In WCW, look at the attendances in all those buildings from 1986 and how Dusty Rhodes killed them great worker, you don't have to be a great wrestler, a technician." To be a worker, I think the whole object is to work the people. I think if you can work the people to where they stay just as excited in a match where you're doing very little, but you're doing it all with charisma, I think you did just as good a job as a guy who goes out there and does a thousand and one holds. Of course, I'd say that to my defense because I don't know a thousand and one holds. Of course, the other person that does know a thousand and one holds and maybe be a good interviewer or a good talker and a good speaker and everything, he might disagree. Surely, today in this business it is proven you don't have to know a thousand and one holds to be one of the top guys in the business.

Clark: Since you started out in the business, were there certain times you concentrated on different things to get yourself over; like when you first got in you were a big guy and you might have been trying to get over with your size...

Eudy: Of course. I really think for the first two years, really more than that, even till today, I worked so hard at trying to be the biggest... It's easy being tall already, but trying to keep the muscle up. I tell you, anyone that takes pride in themself in being in good shape, when you let yourself go a little bit, I think mentally, you feel down about yourself. So whenever you get in good shape, you never want to stay the same, you always want to get in better shape. I think nowadays about 90% of the people, that's all they think about at first- staying in shape and getting bigger. "That's going to get me over because that's what our TV has portrayed to the people, especially to the people that are getting into the business, that bigger is better." And I believe that. I mean, you look at these guys now that are 300 lbs that can do so much. Like Bam Bam Bigelow, he can do anything the Rockers can do off that top rope. That's where it's going to happen. Bigger is better. Bam Bam Bigelow, I can't believe somebody hasn't been using that sonofabitch. To me he's one of the best heels in the business.

Clark: As we were talking about how you were focusing on your size to get you over in the beginning of your career, were you then working on your wrestling skills and then after that you got into the big thing of the interviews and getting yourself over that way?

Eudy: I was a Skyscraper still learning, just worried about that. When I came back and got into being a single, I found out that I really enjoyed that most and that's what I would have to practice on. Then, I started to get into those intervews and I saw myself do one at home and I thought I did pretty good and I just needed to do some different things. That, like anything that I do--and I'm not saying this to be bragging--I don't do anything in my life half-ass. I wake up at five o'clock in the morning and I'm in the gym twice a day. And when I started on those interviews, I did it just the same. I got some jokes about it up in New York (WWF), but once I found out how important the interviews were, I started reading these books. I'd take them with me and I'd already have stuff highlighted for what I was going to say that day. Then, I realized how my credibility was so far above so many other people because of my interviews. And because of my size. That got my size over bigger. I don't know if you've ever noticed this or not, I never flex. I might grab a guy and tighten up a bit or something, but I don't get out there and do the posedown. That time they made me do the posedown in New York City (Summer Slam '91), I was so embarrassed. In my opinion, I think that's bullshit. I think it got over good for Hogan, but I don't like it.

Clark: Why exactly don't you like doing it or agree with it?

Eudy: I think it's almost like showing off. "Look how big I am." I don't need to do that. I think when you don't do that as a heel, it's better. I think it's okay for a babyface. That's why I don't do it, especially as a heel, because I think it's like a show-off thing. That's speaking strictly almost like a heel. I don't like it and even as a babyface, I wouldn't do it either. I think as a babyface it's almost like a slap in the face to some of your fans- "Look how big I am. You're not." You got that feeling when Lex Luger did it. When Hogan did it, it's part of his whole deal. He's got the people pumped up with him. It felt like when Hogan did it, he was doing it with you, not in front of you to show-off. It's a different feeling that different people portray across to the people.

Clark: I was thinking about how earlier you said you were embarrassed to do your first interview and you just talked about the posing, how you are kind of reluctant to do that. Is that maybe out of embarrassment as well or is it just that you're against it?

Eudy: When I look at my character, I've got a lot of different people and characters in this character. Believe it or not, one of the characters that I use in my character is John Wayne. I use his methods- nobody is above getting the shit smacked out of him, even my friends. Ole helped me get that part over. Sometimes he'd have me come to the ring and I'd climb into the ring and beat up the babyface and the heel. "There's nobody that I won't fight against," is part of that character. In the part you asked about, John Wayne never flexed. He was too cool. He walked cool. He took his time. He never got in a hurry. Because, he was the man. That's some of the things I had to get myself to do. Bobby Heenan one time, he hadn't really seen me work that much even up in New York (WWF), but he got to watch me work one night at Madison Square Garden. And he said, "I was impressed. I never knew how much control you had out there." How I just took my time. I could feel it. And the part that he was really seeing was John Wayne. I used to use a couple of his lines when I first started doing interviews. I can't remember them now, but they were pretty cool and corny.

Clark: It was probably a very precise procedure getting all of those different things together for the personality of your character. I was wondering what else you've done and practiced to develop and put together all those traits for your character?

Eudy: What I did was, I took some of the different things different people told me. One for Don Bass. He said, "Sid, you never get a point across better than when you just sit there and you calmly speak into the camera and you never lose focus." Well, that makes sense. You can't do that all the time because it becomes annoying, though.

Clark: You mean like an Ultimate Warrior interview with the yelling...

Eudy: Right, right, his shit is so bizarre it's unbelievable. So, that's one of the things in the character I try to put into the interviews. And I'm still constantly putting things into this thing. One of the last things I put into the character was off that Silence of the Lambs, Hannibal Lector. That guy, and those close-ups they did with him. That's why I would tell Vince, and he agreed, to get those close-ups of that demented look. For my interviews, just the little things like talking really calm. And knowing when to stop for just a second or two. Like, "What the hell is this guy doing?" That's the little things that you've really got to fine tune. And you know when to talk slowly and then start with a small tremble and then it gets worse, and it gets worse, and it gets worse, and then your eyes are bulging, and you're talking with that louder, grasping voice and then you finish off. It's an art. But, you can't do that every interview, you've got to change them up. That's why when I came up to WWF Vince thought it was great that I did that laughing thing. I forget where I picked that up. That's just something I threw in there. I thought the laughing thing was good if you did it right, it's like that little sick laugh. I enjoyed trying to get this thing broader and broader because you don't want to get stereotyped in one thing. You know what amazes me, you watch these matches out there. Almost move for move, every TV match they have. In the squash matches, they do the same moves every match. I can almost tell the guy what he's going to do. It looked real good the one time but you've got to change it up. I learned a lot from Ole about TV matches. Ole's the one who has really got me started on how to get over in those TV matches. You do little things... If you can make that person at home watching that TV feel like he's that guy there and he can't get up for air. But, you've got to work hard to get that over and it doesn't happen all the time no matter how hard you try. In these TV matches, that's something else that helps a person get over, is because you don't have a whole lot of time. Most of the time in those TV matches, I just try to take advantage of everyone I'm on. I think people just don't take everything into consideration. They think that their big muscles are going to make it for them.

Clark: So during your TV matches, the main thing you're concentrating on is the interaction between you and the camera, not so much the work with the wrestler? Is that what you believe a TV match is all about?

Eudy: Exactly. Something else Ole and a lot of other guys have told me, which makes a lot of sense, you can't go out there and give a guy one hundred bumps in three minutes. You don't do anything. This is just for myself, I feel like I can start the match and have the rest of the match with the camera, or keep the guy close to the camera where I can talk to the camera. I feel for myself that gets me over better because the people remember what they see. But, that's the thing that makes this business what it is. Everybody has got to be different. If everybody went out there and did the same thing, it's not going to be any good. But, they could brush everything up a bit. However, I don't think it's so much these guys' fault. I just think they have to be reminded. Man, when you're on a road schedule like we're on with the business, you get mentally tired and you just forget sometimes and you need to be reminded. You know, without Arn and people like that, some of these guys, even myself, we need to be reminded sometimes also. "Let's kick it up a notch, this is TV. Let's get something accomplished. Don't go out there and waste your three to five minutes and waste the programs' time." I think you have to make everything the best you can there. And that's what gives you a top quality show. Of course, both companies, they're trying their best.

Clark: What is your actual feeling on your ring work and your wrestling ability? And are you concentrating on that more or less than interviews?

Eudy: As far as ring work, you're going to learn something, all aspects of the business all the time. I think if you ever come to the point where you say one of these aspects is already as far as I can go and I'm just going to work on the rest of them, then you're sort of fooling yourself. I'm the first to admit that as far as knowing a thousand and one holds, I don't know. As far as... I can take a bump if I need to. I really don't think I need to work at it anymore because I'm not going to be one of these guys that do a thousand and one holds. If I did, it would take away from everything that I worked at. That's just so far from my character. I mean, there's a lot of holds like drop down toe hold that I've just forgot. I could probably do it if I wanted to, but how stupid would it look! Now, there are some things that I do want to do. I do want to learn some of the Japanese holds, things that wouldn't be out of my character. But other than that, I really don't think I need to learn much else. The main thing I want to learn and keep learning about in the ring is the psychology part. I think once you've mastered that, I think the other part, as far as like learning new holds, I think it's insignificant. I don't think it's really something that person needs to worry about.

Clark: Do you still think bigger is better in the wrestling industry?

Eudy: Bigger is better because if you can get a bigger guy that can do the same thing a smaller guy can do and do it just as well, it's going to be better because the people... Like, if me and George Bush walked into a grocery store, and not anybody in the store knowing who we were, people are going to look at me just because of my size. And that's why bigger is better. Because kids especially want their heroes to have big muscles. Because of what they see on TV, these action figures are all big muscled action figures. And that pretty much is why bigger is better. It's not because I'm big, and think it's better. It's simply just the way life is.

Clark: Do you see a change in the WWF because we had seen guys like you, Hulk Hogan, Ultimate Warrior, Road Warriors, big guys, at the top, and now you're seeing Bret Hart and Shawn Michaels and some smaller guys at the top? Do you think maybe the whole thing with the bigger is better theory is now being changed?

Eudy: No. I tell you what the process that happened there was. The only big guy they have is The Undertaker, as far as the only big guy who could possibly be their world champion. You don't have any big guys in that territory other than Scott Hall (Razor Ramon), and he's on top as one of the top heels. That's why the situation is like it is right now. When Lex Luger comes in, it'll go back to the big guys again.

Clark: So, you think the only reason we're seeing a change right now in sizes is because he's without you, Hogan, and Warrior. Do you think that if you and Hulk would go back there that the whole basis of bigger is better would come right back?

Eudy: Of course. If Roddy Piper was to come back in, he'd still go to the top, and he's not a big guy. He's a money-drawer. Bret Hart is up there because he's a good worker and because he's a money-drawer. But, you better believe that if Vince had another group of guys to put in that spot, he'd put them there. He's not doing this because he's trying to go back to the old days of a guy like Bret who knows a thousand and one holds. He is not doing that because of that. He's doing it because he has no other alternative. Who is he getting over on all his TVs? He's getting these bigger guys over like Bam Bam, Yokozuna, Razor is still up there, and when Lex comes in, and then it will be right back to that again. It's just that right now he really doesn't have any. Bret and Flair are probably your best match in the territory, too. So, Flair has probably got as much credibility or more than anybody in that whole territory... He's just ran everybody off.

Clark: What do you think about all the different gimmicks that have been exposed out there in wrestling and what effect have they had on the business now that you look back on the past?

Eudy: If you had asked me that question about a year ago or several years ago, I would have said it had no bearing on the business because then I didn't know anything. And now I know just a little. And the little I know, I would say it has hurt now because he has, like anything else, he has just run his track. Memphis has run their track. They just come up with so many little bullshit gimmick matches that they can't think of anymore. New York has done the same thing. They've just done bizarre, bizarre, more bizarre things, and that's how they get things going. But, they've gotten to the point now that's it's so bizarre. It's like a slap in the face to the audience. Your wrestling fan today is so much smarter than they were years ago. So, you don't want to insult someone. Like so many gimmicks up there are a slap right in the face of the wrestling fan. Nobody is going to believe that there's a real voodoo guy running around the ring putting hexes on people making green shit come out of their arms. I think that was about it. It really was the point where people said, "Hey, you've got to be kidding me." Of course, they say they're directed towards the children audience. But, the kids are almost as smart as the adults.

Clark: Do you think that gimmicks can work in wrestling to a certain extent, but not in the excessive amount we saw in the WWF?

Eudy: Everybody wants to believe in the supernatural a little bit or in voodoo or in ghosts or something like that. I think he could have done a little something and made it real interesting. But, that's something Vince has always said- how he can go so far with just a little bit. And I think there's a lot of merit to what he said about that. But then, I think he was just struggling. Like a football coach who's losing. He's calling out some bad plays and he's trying to catch up.

Clark: Back when you were going through contract negotiations in 1991 with WCW, it was reported that they just about offered you everything you wanted plus as much more as they possibly could. But, you didn't take the offer and you left for the WWF. What were your main reasons for leaving WCW to go to the WWF?

Eudy: I didn't have any personal reasons within the company, at all. I'm going to tell you something, that was the biggest mistake I ever made- leaving that company. I took a guy's word on some things that were going to be done. The lies, it didn't take more than a month or so before the lies started. But the thing is, I sort of understood the situations that were happening at that time and I wanted to be a team player and I wanted to get in and play as a team, and take the responsibilities. But, it wasn't aything that WCW had done. I told Jim Herd and Mr. Barnett, even if they had offered me a million dollars a year, I wouldn't have took it because of the chance I was getting. I was promised the top spot there with Titan. I know for a fact from just talking to the agents- and I've always been a person who underestimates myself a little bit- I know I could have done it. I couldn't have carried the company (WWF), but I could have helped it. I could have never did the job Hogan did. But, I proved that I could help it. The houses I drew when I was in there, it's pretty easy to see what I was a part of when I was in there and what it is today. I'm not saying that I'm better than anyone, because I'm not as a person. But, we all were just either lucky or unlucky in life, and I was lucky to have the things I have offered in this business.

Clark: I guess you could say that Vince made what he had to offer sound more appealing than anything WCW had to offer? Have you learned from this situation about trust in the wrestling business?

Eudy: Oh yeah, I sure have. I'll say this, Vince was real good to me in there. He did a lot for me and paid me very, very good. I've never seen any money like some of the weeks I had in there. I'll never see that with WCW. First of all, I don't see me ever going back to the WWF. Ever. I hope I have a long career in WCW and by that time that they'll be out of business. He (Vince McMahon) screwed my life around pretty bad. The thing was, I talked to him one time--this is after the lies already started--and I said, "Vince, if we ever have problems or if things get bad, I hope that we'll be able to come to an agreement pretty easy." And he said, "Sid, I would never stop you from working." Now he's done this to me and my family for eight months. The one thing that's good out of this is that I've stayed clear for eight months because it's eight months I can't burn myself out of the business.

Clark: Has it given you a lot of time to think about everything and to put your life back into perspective?

Eudy: It's given me a lot of time to think about things in my life. I respect things that I have a lot more now. Now, I just want to go in and I want to try to do good in WCW, stay there a couple good years. I really don't need much more than that. If I get anything more than that out of there, that will be good. But, I've got a real bad taste in my mouth for the business. I always thought a person's word was at least worth a little something. But when you purposely try to ruin a man's life, and he has let so many other people out of their contracts so quickly. Honestly, what really bothers me about this is I felt like me and Vince were good friends. When we talked, I really felt like I was talking to a friend. And he really treated me really good while I was there. That's what's so weird about the whole thing. Man, when we were face to face, it was genuine conversation. He treated me like a person. He always listened to things I had say. He used some of my ideas--they were just little stupid ideas. If I had an idea for myself and if he thought it was good, he let me use it. If he didn't think it was good, he would tell me why, and it always made sense. He could explain it to you where you understood why it was wrong. He never even screamed or hollered or anything like that. So that is why I'm a little hurt by this whole thing. Because when you feel like you have a friend, like in the Bruno Lauer situation, and the friend turns on you... Maybe that has a little something to do with why I'm hurt, how he was able to get one of my better friends, a guy who, I turned his whole life around, without one little bit of exaggeration, and have him shit on me like that. That's what really bothers me about Vince. This whole time I've tried to call him a couple times when they asked me to call and he wouldn't return my phone call. Now, he's dragged this thing out for me for this long. I could have easily been out of his contract three months ago when everybody got paid for Wrestlemania (8). But for some reason, Sid's check hadn't showed up! "We can't figure out Sid's percentage!" And he screwed me bad on the payoff. But the main thing was that I thought, even after all the shit happened to me, I still believed the guy was going to come around for me. I turned heel when he asked me to. My whole deal was to be the big babyface in there. That's how I was going to make my big money in there. And he didn't have a heel. "Sid, could you do it?" "Sure, man. I'll do it." I sacrificed everything that I was promised. Now, he made up for it. Like I said, there's not anything that he didn't do good for me. He made up for those mistakes. He helped me out in a lot of ways by compensating my pay. He took care of me. The thing that bothers me is that he let a person's whole life just go on for eight months, not knowing the turmoil he caused here. Some days I'd be so mad. You're no good to your family like that. That's why I'm mad. That's why I'll never go back there.

Clark: And that's the biggest mistake you've ever made in your whole life and what do you think the effects of that mistake were?

Eudy: It is the biggest mistake I ever made in my life. If I would have stayed at WCW, I'd have that big, sweet contract. I would have been a lot farther along in this business than I am today because the people working there were real good to me. Dusty was good to me. He took a lot of shit from me. I can't say anything but good about how he treated me in the short time I was in there with him. I felt like a shithead for dumping on him. I really do. He was already starting to build a lot of stuff around me. And then boom, I'm gone, over a promise.

Clark: What were the things that Vince promised to you?

Eudy: Just that it was the chance of a lifetime. I couldn't have ever got a better chance. I was promised Hogan's spot. He was retiring and I was getting that spot.

Clark: Was that or had it been a dream of yours?

Eudy: John, when a person gets in this business, his dreams are to make some real money and to be somebody. I made that with WCW. I made the money and I was somebody. Of course the ultimate dream, you think or you thought, was being the top guy in the WWF, the Hulk Hogan. You know it doesn't get any better than that, looking at that guy and everything he has. So, the money that was offered to me in WCW I could make in one night there. That's the difference. That's what you were promised. I don't look to make another big mistake like that.

Clark: Do you think one of the reasons Vince has lost a lot of his top stars is because of the promises he makes and maybe ins't able to carry them out all the time?

Eudy: I don't know about that. I think there's a lot of small promises made. I don't think there's a lot of big promises like that one made. I think my situation is a whole different case. I know that he has probably lied to a lot of people. What happens is when you're in Vince's position, Bill Watts' position, or anyone's position like that, you're always a liar and you're always wrong. Naturally, you never can be a winner in that position. Everybody is going to have the same story- "That guy screwed me and screwed me and screwed me." I know for a fact that he's done a lot of good things for a lot of guys. He took care of me fair when I was off with my arm injury. I think my incident is a different one. I don't think he has ever promised anyone the top of the world, and then didn't try it.

Clark: Looking from a promoters' point of view, there has been a lot of injuries that you've suffered from and you've jumped from promotion to promotion before. Do you think they might have any problems with your reliability or anything like that?

Eudy: I'll tell you, I didn't leave WCW. Dusty Rhodes came to me, way before my contract was up, and asked me to sign a new contract. He said, "Sid, if you and the office- being Jim Herd- can't come to an agreement, I'll understand." Well, they offered me some money and I was interested in it. But then I said I knew the situation of the way it was in New York, that Hogan was only working part-time and that they really needed a new face in there- heel or babyface in there- they needed some new talent. I thought that would be a good time to give the guy a call. So, I called him (McMahon) and he flew me up. And he asked me, "Sid, if you could take the magic wand, what would you want?" And I told him. He said, "That's what you can have." I came back to WCW and they had offered me an even bigger deal. I wasn't even going to call Vince back, I was just going to fly up there (WWF) the next morning to sign the deal. Vince called me that next morning and said, "Have you signed (with WCW)?" I said, "No Vince, but I'm telling you, I'm on my way. I didn't want to call you because I didn't want you to think that I was trying to play both fields." He said, "Sid, don't think like that at all. I want you to call me. Don't make that mistake and sign there (WCW)." As for the promoters, everyone of them, if they say I'm unreliable, I don't care which one it is, I'll tell them them right to their face they're a fuckin' liar. I worked my ass off in WCW, along with Lex and Sting. We worked our asses off every night in front of nobody. Not one night did I ever slack off. I gave 110% every night. And I did the job every night in there. If anyone says anything bad about me, they're a liar. Something else a lot of these promoters forget, you know, I never had that chance of ever getting over in the towns. I came back from my lung injury in July. I wasn't even into going back into the gym and start working out and rehabilitating myself until July. I came back into the ring six months early. That's why I wore that wrestling type of gear that had the straps, because the scar was still pretty obvious. The bicep thing was just a fluke accident. You can't blame Jake Roberts and I for having miscommunication and accidently tearing by bicep. If I'm to blame for that, then I am. But when I worked, I was there every night, never late, and always worked hard. And that's all a promoter can ask for. As far as me up and leaving places, I did up and leave WCW. I gave them a long notice. I walked out of there with no bridge burned. As a matter of fact, they were a little upset that they were losing me and that I was leaving. And they felt like I could be a big part of that company, helping it. They had a lot of things planned for me. That's the reason why I feel it was the biggest mistake I made. I felt like Dusty was going to live up to his end of the bargain. I really believed he was going to make me world champion. Vince said the same thing, but he never did. I was supposed to have been made world champion at Wrestlemania. But, I was supposed to have been a lot of things that weren't. But, no one can say anything bad about that. I worked up in New York with a broken hand for about a month. So those things are like when people are saying stuff about you that really isn't true. It might look like it from the outside, but they don't know the situation on the inside.

Clark: What happened that night on April 27 in Boston, Massachusetts when you walked out and left the WWF?

Eudy: I'll tell you exactly why I left. I was sick of the bullshit. I wasn't going to let me hear one more lie. I had heard enough lies and I had been lied to enough. I could see that they weren't going to do anything like they said they were going to. That night really didn't set off anything, it was just a long thing brewing. They wanted me to use my finish on the guy (Ultimate Warrior) and have him kick out of it. I said, "Man, you don't have any plans for anybody doing something like that." Really, I had asked Vince earlier, the night of the Royal Rumble, if I could be released. I was already sick of the lies then. I told him that I'd work out any kind of notice he wanted. It was just that I wanted out of there. I reminded him of the conversation that we had and I said, "I'm only going on your word. You promised me if things didn't work out that I would go and that you would give me no problem." I told him, "I'm not blaming anything on you." Because a lot of it wasn't his fault. He was running with the Warrior. I had to take the guy's place. So, all the plans that they had planned for me went right down the tubes as far as what we were doing. I didn't blame him for that. He could have found someone else, he could have asked someone else to do that. But, I didn't blame him for it. And I said, "Now, I'm asking you not to blame me for letting me out. I want the hell out." I can't remember exactly, but I think I told him that I'd like to finish up after Wrestlemania. I think he already knew that. I mean, I begged him to let me go. We talked and I was pretty pissed about the lie about not putting the belt on me. At that point I just wanted him to let me go on. I told him, "Maybe in the future when things are different and we sit down and talk again and you tell me the plans you might have for me, if there are any, and if they're something that I can believe in, I'd give it a try again." But at that point, there was no getting close to what we talked about.

Clark: When you walked out that night, I guess Bruno Lauer (Harvey Whippleman) also went with you. However, he was still with the WWF after that. What do you think they were going to do with him?

Eudy: I knew exactly what they were going to try to do with him. They were going to try to shift my heat on to someone else, and use him to do it. Now this might sound a little selfish. I know Vince did not want him as a manager. I begged and begged and begged and got him in there at the very end of the night at TV in Lubbock, Texas (January 1992). Bruno never would have gotten that position. I gave it to him because I wanted to help him and I wanted him to maybe have a pretty long career with me. I did everything for him. I didn't think that he should use what I had done for him against me. I told him that that night in Lubbock, I said, "If anything happens, Bruno, I'll make the decisions. You listen to me because it's really my career." I never really used him as a manager. I did all my talking and stuff. I just wanted to use him for coming in and giving the guy his "Last Rites" to beef up my gimmick a little bit because I don't really have a gimmick. It just made things look better. Not everyone had their own doctor to check the guy that they just killed. I just thought that was a shitty thing that Bruno did to me. I think under other circumstances or other people, it's every man for himself- go, go, go. But when you honestly wouldn't have had anything if it wasn't for that one person, I think it's different. I think Vince knows it. I think Vince tried to rub that in my face.

Clark: Do you still consider Bruno a friend?

Eudy: No. He has wrote me a hundred times, I throw his letters away. I never will talk to him for the rest of my life. Ever. Ever. The thing is, Vince can sit there and pay him. Honestly, he's never going to draw a nickle in this business. So, he can sit there and pay Bruno Lauer to maybe try to get back at me. Well, he's not doing anything but bringing his company deeper in debt. I mean, that's a deal that you can deal without. He's insignificant with that whole gimmick. I don't believe the gimmick is getting over, the whole Kamala thing.

Clark: So, you really feel Vince has just kept him there to spite you?

Eudy: Exactly. He hasn't kept him there because he's a talent because he doesn't think Bruno has any talent. Vince told me that. Vince was so against me having a manager. I thought it was getting over pretty good and it would have gotten over a lot better if I stuck with it, or if we'd stuck there together. But that right there is just a person that you thought was your friend, and the money meant more. I know that I do have a couple friends in this world that wouldn't have dumped me like that. He did, and I don't consider him a friend and I'll never talk to him. I'm sure he's not going to lose any sleep over it. I can tell you one thing, I mean this- if he was to come and work for WCW, I'd quit that day. I will never work in a territory that he works in. And if the company thinks that he's a bigger asset than I am, well by god, then they can have him. That's how I feel about it. I don't hate anybody that bad.

Clark: It seems as though you take a great value in honesty. Isn't tha really hard to find in this business and is that depressing to you?

Eudy: That is so depressing, I swear to god. I'm sure people will laugh at this if they want to. Living in Arkansas all my life, living on a farm, living around good people--not all country people are good people, there are thieves and everything else in Arkansas, so I'm not saying Arkansas is a pure place--but in the south and in the country, you learn to trust people. It's an old southern tradition. It's one that's really pretty corny nowadays with a lot of people. And that is, trust. And it is being able to handshake with somebody and say this or that. I learned some simple values in my life. If I was to sell something to someone and the thing had a kink in it or it was a little tore up, I would tell the person. I wouldn't dare sell it knowing it was tore up. That's just the way I am.

Clark: I guess you wouldn't be a used car salesman then...

Eudy: If I was, I'd be like my father-in-law, I wouldn't do very well at it. He tells a person what's wrong with the car when they come into the car lot. He doesn't sell a whole lot of cars. But, that's the thing that really bothers me about this business. There's so many assholes and so many people that just think about themselves. That is a big part of what's wrong with this business today. A lot of people have been in charge in this business in different territories and only thought of themselves. And that's why their territory is the shits. That's why they didn't draw any money. I always used to ask this question when I was getting into the business and didn't know about it- as soon as a new booker came in, the new booker put everything on himself- and I thought, "God, wouldn't somebody be smart enough to come in a territory, be the booker, and just do everything for everybody else, work hard to get everybody else over?" And they couldn't say, "I didn't get a chance to get over." And then after he tried that, and then he put some stuff on himself, then people couldn't question him. I said, "Wouldn't somebody be that smart to do that?" To get some of that damn respect from some of these people who after years and years and years of lying, lying, lying. You know what it is, I think no one would believe an honest person in this business. It's just a simple thing. I always thought that somebody would be smart enough to come in and just push the people that needed a push. To push the people that say they needed a push, if not just to prove to them that they didn't need the push. Push the guy and say, "Are you selling any tickets?" "Well, no I haven't." Then you could say, "Well, don't gripe at me when I'm pushing this other guy who didn't sell any tickets. I'm just trying."

Clark: A week before Wrestlemania last year, about a month before you left Titan, there were some reports over a controversy with your drug testing. Could you comment on what happened?

Eudy: I'll tell you what happened. I got caught using a thing with someone else's urine, trying to give it to them for a sample. I got caught for that but never got in any trouble for it. Even Vince's lawyer said that to my lawyer, "Sid got caught trying to do that but we didn't fine him for it or we didn't bring up anything about it. So why has he walked out like this?" My lawyer said, "He walked out because he's sick of the bullshit. He didn't walk out because of the piss test, he knows you're not going to fine him or suspend him." We didn't say that but we knew they couldn't afford to do that at that time. If I wanted to be an asshole, like some of the guys that have been in there, I could have said, "Hey, I'm going to do what I want to. Kick me out of here, fine me, suspend me, send me home. You're not cutting anybody's throat but your own."

Clark: What experiences have you had with steroids?

Eudy: The pressure of steroids is obvious, especially when you think bigger is better. I learned through WCW. I was under that contract, I didn't have to get any bigger. So I stopped the use of steroids. Everybody came to me and said, "Man, you look better than you've ever looked." So I thought I never needed them again. So, I didn't use them for a long time. After my arm surgery, after all the plans changed, right after my first TV back- where I wasn't even working yet- he flew me in for a TV to take a piss test. I had started back on the use of steroids because Vince had told me, "Sid, we're going to turn you heel." Well man, I went home in a panic. It's like, here goes another lie. I was the only one that knew that the Warrior was coming in. So I said, "Shit, here goes the spot he promised me. He's giveing it back to this guy." So in a panic, I started them (steroids) again. I'm not proud of it, but I did. I started them back but I didn't want to get caught. So, I was cheating on that piss test. I got caught. Really, at that point, it was almost at Wrestlemania, and I had already told him at Royal Rumble that I was ready to finish up at Wrestlemania. He had started that turn and I knew where it was going, me and Hulk in the main event. I said, "I wouldn't do anybody like that. I'll stay till then." I told him, "That's as long as I could promise that I'd would stay, till Wrestlemania." I told him that night in Albany, the night of Royal Rumble. But yeah, I started them back for a short time. I quit them prior to Wrestlemania after I got caught. I was going to quit them anyway, but I was coming back from my arm surgery and panicked that I had already lost my spot that I was promised. I just thought this would give me that extra edge again, which it does. I needed to make some quick gains quick. I needed to make gains and make them quick. With this torn bicep, I was limited. I still today don't have all functions with all the excercises I used to do. So I'd have to fight even harder now with a lad that's half ripped from my lung surgery and now my left bicep is about 80%. So, I started using them again. And then I stopped again. I haven't done any since I took that drug test where I got caught right before Wrestlemania. I quit them right after that.

Clark: Earlier you said that you told him you were only going to stay until Wrestlemania. Why did you stay with them after Wrestlemania?

Eudy: Well after Wrestlemania, we had that tour over in Europe. I had just started that heel thing and it was getting over. What he promised was, "Sid, we're going to turn you heel, we're going to make you hotter than any heel that's ever been through here, then we're going to switch you back." I said, "Okay." When he told me that, I didn't even believe one second of it. But Vince has that way about talking to you and you're walking out of the room saying, "Well, I didn't do what I wanted to do." I was trying to tell him, "I'm through."

Clark: From your experiences with the WWF, were they honest with their drug testing programs that Vince had installed?

Eudy: It's hard to say. I think they've really become real serious about them. I think it was a good thing. I believe that anybody who's doing steroids, you'll be on a suspension, I don't doubt that. I just think I was in a particular situation where they really couldn't afford to suspend me at the time. I'm pretty sure they would have gotten me down the road. But, I had already come off. So if they were to suspend me, they would have had to suspend me for something else. I think in all fairness, I think maybe he was doing it in fairness to me. He knew that I was coming back from a bad injury and I needed that little extra help. I think maybe they would have maybe just overlooked it for that reason, not because they couldn't have carried on without me. All these other guys had been on them and were still on them at the time that we were taking the tests. They were just coming off of them real slow. I know for a fact that people were still on them after I quit because I saw them do them. But the people I saw do them, they're out of there, they were fired for that. One of them was a new guy and had a lot of potential and they had a lot of plans for him. But when his level kept staying the same, they got rid of him.

Clark: So the situation where he let you go from the drug test, it just would have been tough for him to pull you out of there with all of the big buildup for you and Hogan at Wrestlemania?

Eudy: He couldn't have. He was caught in a situation where he couldn't have. At that point, this wasn't but my second or third drug test from being back from my injury. I hadn't really had a chance to fail any. The deal was, if you show up (sign of steroids), the next time it's got to be lower. If not, that's when they know you're continuing to do it. I'm pretty sure my levels were getting lower. I'm sure that the first couple tests showed up negative because I was cheating! They would have had to wait on the first reading that they knew was a real test and then the next one would have counted for me. I guess by the rules, they weren't wrong and I wasn't wrong. I was wrong for cheating, but they would have had to give me at least one more drug test to have made it fair. I believe he's cleaned that up in there, I do believe that. I think steroids is a horrible thing. You don't see people dropping dead everyday but you might twenty years from now. It's a scary thing just thinking about it after you have already done it. You hear the possibilities and that's what scares me because I've got a little boy now and a child on the way. I want to live as long as I can. I don't want to shorten it up by trying to gain five or ten extra pounds. It usually just bloats you up anyway.

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This final part of the interview with Sid Eudy, 33, who now has a wife and two kids, was re-conducted via telephone from his home near West Memphis, Arkansas on January 12, 1994.

John Clark: What is your current status with World Championship Wrestling and their four-year contract deal that they offered to you?

Sid Eudy: It's still up in the air. I'm still waiting on a phone call from them. From the last meeting I had with them, they wanted to work out a solution. That's about really where it's at now. The only time I talked to them was when me and my lawyer went to Atlanta and had a meeting with Bob Dhue, Bill Shaw, and Eric Bischoff. Eric Bischoff had pointed out a couple reasons why he didn't think that I could work for him. He really didn't have any. The ones we talked about, I think I gave them good answers on. He said he was scared of mutiny in WCW with one or two wrestlers. Never mentioned their names. Bob Dhue had nothing to say other than just always shaking his head a lot. Bill Shaw, it seemed like to me, he was just trying to figure out a solution to bring things to a happy medium where everybody felt comfortable.

Clark: What do you think of the way WCW has handled the incident between you and Arn Anderson and the aftermath of it?

Eudy: I think without a doubt they handled it poorly. They never came to an answer. They never said what they really found out. I think the reason why they never came out with it is because without a doubt my story was absolutely the only one with any credibility, from what evidence they had to go on. The English police's investigation was that the chair wasn't used and couldn't have been used. No blood from Arn was on it and none of my blood was on it. It was in a hallway several feet away from Arn's door, and nowhere in between Arn's doors and the doors where the altercation took place. They know that. I know that. There never was a question of that. In our meeting, they never questioned that. Not one time. They said that had nothing with the problems that they had with me.

Clark: What is your detailed account of what happened in the incident on October 26 in England involving you and Arn Anderson?

Eudy: It started there in the bar after we all got off the bus from the show that night. We were in the bar. I can't state what everybody else was doing. I was waiting on my sandwiches, like some other people I know were doing. We were sitting there having some drinks. We were all at one table together at one point talking. We got to talking about things. I felt that maybe the conversation was getting a little too much for Arn. He chose to get away from the table, not wanting to answer some of the questions I was asking him. It got over to the bar where we starting arguing a little bit, exchanging thoughts of each other. I was sitting on a bar stool. He came over to me one time and got in my face. I took my watch off, and he asked me, "What are you going to do? Beat me up." I said, "No. But if you don't get out of my face, I will get you away from me." At that point he moved maybe four feet away from me at the same bar we were sitting at. A few more things were said. Finally, he threw a beer mug full of beer in my face. At that point everybody jumped in to get in between us. No one grabbed him and no one grabbed me. They just got in between us. Arn didn't come at me and I didn't come at him. At that point Arn was saying some things like, "I'll cut your guts out with a beer bottle," and things like that. After taking him out of the bar, he's still screaming stuff at me, and I'm screaming stuff at him. I got tired of waiting on my sandwiches so I went to my room, and they were in there. I remember eating part of the sandwich, sitting there like anybody else who's had too much to drink. I think anybody who had been hit in the face with a beer mug is going to have their feelings hurt and feel like they need to vindicate themselves. I'm no different from anyone else after being insulted like that.

At that point knowing Arn's not going to fight me fair, as he had already made that threat, I was sitting in a chair and looking at it. I took it and I broke it. I went down the hall. I got down to his doorway. I was knocking on his door telling him to come out. He was in on the other side screaming at me. I remember at that point his voice becoming faint or distant. I honestly thought he was either on the phone talking to somebody or maybe he had tripped and was passing out. I could hear what he was saying but his sentences weren't together. They weren't really making any sense. I remember at that point looking at the back part of the chair, the cushion part, that I had in my hand, and I thought to myself, "If he came out here, I couldn't hit an old woman and hurt him with that part of the chair." I got mad and I slammed the chair on the ground right there next to the door. Also at that point, I felt like a damn fool. For one thing, I was pretty inebriated anyway. But at this point after having the beer sloshed in my face, with a little time going by and realizing what a jerk I was being in the hall, even trying to vindcate myself or stand up for my honor. I still felt like a fool because I was talking to another fool on the other side of the door who's just as drunk or drunker than I was, and it had really gone too for. Coming to my senses, thinking, "This is really stupid. He's not going to come out anyway." I've never pretended to be a big fighter. Arn's not a fighter. I think it's really out of both our characters to be in that situation.

After that I remember slamming the chair down and taking no more than two steps away from the door, back towards my room. I turned around. Arn's there, really almost on me right away. I remember looking at Arn and the first thing I noticed was that he had something in his hand. Not thinking, I put my hands out to him wide open. I mean I didn't have a thought in the world that he would honestly do something like that. I remember saying, "Hey Arn, this has gone too far." At about that time, he jabbed with the scissors. When he jabbed me, I guess because of the adrenaline flow and the fear, everything set in on me. I remember backing up into the doorway. I couldn't honestly tell you where I was stabbed first at because I was too scared.

I remember backing up to the doorway after he stabbed me a first time, and he just kept on. I know it was just a few seconds he had to have stabbed me twice in the face, once in the gut, and once in the hand. Thinking of it, he could have done that pretty quickly because he was just jabbing real fast at me, with nowhere for me to go, and he's coming onto me. It even makes more sense to me when I think about.

The next thing I remember is him and I between the doors and him being knocked down but not out. I remember he and I looking at each other at the same time when we both noticed the scissors at both our feet. His head was down from me and our feet were real close together right there between the two doors in the hall. I remember grabbing the scissors. I don't remember stabbing him one time. When I say I don't remember it, it was like a flash to me. It was sort of like a movie that was in fast-forward motion. I remember stabbing him, but I couldn't tell you where. I was scared that I had stabbed him in his throat, but I found out later that I hadn't. I was really glad about that.

The next thing I remember is him saying, "You're killing me." Him saying that, he was bringing me to my senses. I was over him and I had the scissors in my hand at this time. I remember looking at him and trying to pick him up, but couldn't because I noticed blood gushing out of my shirt. Now I realized where I was stabbed at, in the stomach.

But you have to realize something. It's easy for people to hear stories and not be feeling the feelings that I felt and Arn had to have felt also being in a predicament like that. Coming through the doors I can only guess that we got into a skirmish and he went down. See the scissors at my feet and his feet, and his eyes meeting my eyes, and at this point I didn't remember being stabbed but knew it, the one thing I do remember was, "If I don't stop him, he's going to stab me again." I guess that could set off anyone. When I say that unless you've been in a situation like that, fortunately this is my first time and hopefully my last, you really don't know that feeling unless you've experienced it.

After that I went to the front desk and asked the person behind the counter to call an ambulance. She asked me if anyone else was hurt. I said, "I'm not for sure. But there is someone down in the hallway." I think they then called two ambulances.

Clark: After the incident was over, how did you react to learning that you had stabbed him up to eighteen times?

Eudy: It's weird. I went to the hospital and went in straight to surgery. There was so much going on for the first few hours. It was just chaos. I was worried about my injuries. I really hadn't even heard anything much about Arn. The first recollection that I remember someone telling me was, the police. They were telling me that Arn only had two black eyes and that they're thinking that I should press charges against him since he was the one that brought out the scissors. I didn't know that to be true. I think one of the people at WCW had said that Arn was also stabbed, but he didn't know how bad. I thought, "We're both in this thing. It's not a good situation for either one of us." My lawyer was telling me it wasn't good to press charges right or wrong because we'd have to go over there and go through their court system, and that it was better just to forget it. My lawyer knew the extent of things better than I did at that time. I had been through surgery and I was on heavy, heavy medication too. I had been through a great ordeal. The officers came in again trying to get me to press charges making me think Arn's not hurt. Finally, the doctor tells me that Arn has been stabbed several times and that the police officers were just saying that. At that time there wasn't any question in my mind that I didn't want to press charges. I felt like we were both in a bad situation a long ways from home and I didn't want to make it harder on him or myself. That's really the extent of it.

Clark: Did you ever try to contact Arn after the incident was over?

Eudy: Yeah. I tried to a couple days after being home once I came off the medication. After everybody was calling wanting my side of the story, I thought I would call Arn. I still have a lot of hard feelings towards a lot of things about this deal. But one thing I'll say. I can't say I'm sorry for what I've done. In the same situation, I'm sure I would do the same thing again. I felt like I was defending myself. I know and Arn knows. We're the only two that know, unless Arn was so drunk that he doesn't remember. But he knows and I know that he's the one that came out of that room. I had nothing in my hands when he attacked me. I did come to the room with the back of a chair. I never once used it on Arn. When Arn came out that door I had nothing in my hands and no reason for him to do what he did. So what I did to protect myself, some people might say it was too far. I don't know. The one thing I do feel bad about is that it happened to Arn. Arn has always been decent to me. He's always treated me as a person. He has never said anything bad to me to my face. He's always been very, very kind to me and always been helpful. I've always respected Arn. If you would have asked me even today who I thought I was most likely going to have a serious argument with, and you asked me to name off fifty people, Arn wouldn't be in that fifty. He's not a violent person. I never thought him to be and never heard of him to be violent. I just would have never thought it to be him just because of the way he's been to me and the way I've always treated him. I think if you ask him, he'd pretty much have to tell you the same.

Clark: Are you upset that Arn would not return your phone call?

Eudy: I wasn't upset or mad that he didn't return my calls because anytime two people get in an argument like that, everybody's different on how they forgive people. I've never been one to hold a grudge against anyone for things even like this. This is the way I look at it. Two people had too much to drink and something went way too far. I don't blame Arn for it. I definitely don't blame myself for it. I just blame the circumstances and the situation. It sort of bothers me he never returned my call. I think now that he's even making himself to believe that somehow I miracliously attacked him with that chair and knocked him out, and he regained consciousness then attacked me with the scissors. I really believe he knows himself that not to be true. That might be the only thing that bothers me. The lies that have been told about this thing. When something like this happens to myself, I have never cared at all what people have thought about me. I don't care if people like me. I feel like I work as hard or harder than almost anybody in our business to achieve what I've achieved. The thing that does bother me is that the lies that have been told and the things that have happened out of this deal haven't just affected me. They've affected my family. WCW can say that their reasons for firing me and not Arn is that Arn is a guy that is easily replaced, a guy on the card that doesn't matter if he shows up or not, and a guy that works only night by night. I feel sorry for Arn's family to have gone through the pain and suffering of this ordeal. However, Arn's back to work. I'm not yet. I don't care what people do to me. But when I pick up my six-month-old boy and look at him, it bothers me that these lies and the untruths of the story have affected him, in a small way. Nothing I won't bounce back from. I've got a long ways to go and I've got a lot to offer to this business. Somehow, someway I'll get back into it. Probably right back in WCW. But the thing that bothers me the most is the people that weren't there and weren't part of the incident, and have put their two cents worth in.

I say that comes from jealousy of me. There's not a handful of people at WCW that can equal me in what I could do for the business--WCW's days of money being drawn at house shows is almost obsolete--as far as adding to their show and making it a little better of a show. Or the way I've handled myself for the most part in or out of the ring and I feel my ethics have made me be able to contribute to the business of wrestling more. I don't think anybody's ethics are any better than mine, as far as my discipline. One of which is not drinking. It's funny that's how this whole thing started. I told them in that meeting in Atlanta, "If I was one who went out drinking every night and got into a brawl or a fight every other night, this would just be another occurrance. But since I don't get into those things and since I am that sort of person that everybody would love to see fall because I've been successful, things like that get blown out of proportion so quickly."

Clark: In your opinion, how close were either of you to being killed?

Eudy: I don't think either one of us were close to being killed. I know that because of the extent of my injury in the abdominal area, the surgery was done because there was a chance of it puncturing something inside. So I guess the only one close to being seriously hurt was myself because I was the only one they put into surgery. But anytime anyone is attacked or stabbed like that, there's a potential of seriousness. So we both in a sense were, but we're both still here.

Clark: Who or what do you think is ultimately responsible for this incident taking place?

Eudy: In my mind there was just only one reason. That's drinking. If I hadn't been drunk, that would have never happened. I wouldn't have pushed the argument with me and Arn. I would have just shrugged it off. Even getting the beer mug thrown in my face, I feel like I would have just said, "Hey, the hell with it." I know if I hadn't been drinking it just never would have happened. I feel the same with Arn. I mean Arn and I have never had one cross-word to each other. The only time we've ever really associated with each other most of the time was in the locker room or going through airports. We never went to bars together. The only reason I think this happened was from drinking. I wouldn't have been drinking if WCW hadn't only had just beer on the bus.

Clark: How do you react to some of the critics in some of the newsletters describing your actions in the incident as a roid rage?

Eudy: I think that right there is someone who probably has no education at all, steroids to start with. I don't know how anyone could say it could have been a roid rage. It seems like if I was going to have a roid rage, I would have had one once a week or once a month. It wouldn't be once in my whole life. If I'm on steroids that bad, it would be happening to everyone else that is on steroids. At that point I had made a big move and stopped using steroids completely. I'm not going to say I never used them, and anybody else that says they didn't are liars. For them to say it was a roid rage is just absurd. There was no one there. How could someone say it was a roid rage? How come people couldn't say it was because my honor had been insulted by being slapped in the face with a mug of beer. I guess no one thinks of things like that or thinks that that couldn't make someone mad enough. I guess if someone stabbed you in the stomach and stabbed you in the face, that's not reason enough to defend yourself? At what point do you say that I was defending myself or that it was a roid rage? That would be my question to people who are saying that.

Clark: Do you think that is just a tool or an argument to attack you with from Arn Anderson supporters or people who don't like you?

Eudy: Of course, that's all it is. That's the only thing I can think of it being. People had called and I wouldn't give them my side of the story. That sort of makes people mad right there, that I don't talk to people. You know that and I know that. You're the only person I've ever talked to before. I never give out interviews. Things like that make people mad. Bill Apter, he's mad at me because I wouldn't do a photo session for him when I was with Vince. He begged and begged for me to do it, and I never would. When he called me on the phone, I wouldn't give him an interview because it's none of his business. I'm adult enough that I don't have to fight my battles through such things like the trash magazines which have no truth to them whatsoever anyway. You know and I know that wrestling magazines are full of shit of anyway. It never prints one bit of the truth anyway. They even know where you live at or the simplest things, and they make up a lie. They fabricate things to make stories interesting for people to buy them. I feel like even if I would have told Apter or anybody else the truth about the thing, it probably never would have gotten printed anyway. I think over the years in the business I have become smart enough at least that I don't rely on and I don't believe these things like wrestling magazines or sheets. I've never put my stock in those and that's why I don't talk with them. I'm giving you this story for my own reasons. Maybe no one will believe it. I don't care. But if you've got any intelligence at all... Not intelligence, that's the wrong word because there's not many people in our business with any intelligence. If you've got any common sense at all, you'd have to at least say one thing. That you don't know the truth because there was no one in the hall but me and Arn. You can be smart enough to say that. So for anyone to make up their own story, they have got to be more stupid than me and Arn for doing what we did.

Clark: In your opinion, because of this incident, do you think both you and Arn should have fired from WCW?

Eudy: I feel like we both should have been fired from WCW in a way because of the seriousness of the incident. But I don't believe that the incident would have happened if proper things had been taken care of. Like putting some cold drinks and food on the bus. WCW said there was food on the bus. There was no food on the bus. They expect us to come to the building after eating a big meal a couple hours before the match. I can't do that and I don't know many other people that can do that. Then after that you're going to make four hours on the road on an empty stomach drinking that strong beer. Any beer is really strong to me. I'll be the first to tell you, I get a pretty good buzz off of three or four. Here I am on the bus shotgunning beers with the guys. It was fun, being there with your friends and you're having a good time. You don't think that later on you're going to get into a stabbing fight. If I was going to have something to drink or have a little fun, I always wait until the end of a tour, even if it's a tour here in the States. I feel like when I drink I have to have almost two days off just because I don't drink very much, and when I do I have the worst hang-overs. I'm not able to, like a lot of the guys, to drink all night, get up the next day, go to the gym, and then be able to make the town. I think it's a bad business decision and bad ethics to drink like that because I don't want to go in the ring with the guy I'm working with all hung over, feeling down, and being tired and worn out, and then do something stupid like mess up and hurt somebody because I had too much to drink the night before or even hours before the match. There's a lot of people that do that

Clark: Why do you feel so many wrestlers have sided with Arn, and what kind of an effect do you think this has on your job with WCW?

Eudy: I thought strongly that there was more people taking Arn's side. But the more people I've talked to, they're not really taking any sides because they don't know what the truth is either. The people that I know that know me as who I am and what I am, these people are also pretty good friends with Arn and have known Arn longer than they've known me. They haven't picked sides. It's only the people who are threatened by me, who are jealous of me, or are Arn's friends, who are taking Arn's side or think Arn's side to be true. How crazy and totally impossible it is. If I hit Arn coming out of his door with just a punch with my fist, he would have never gotten those scissors on me, much less hitting him with a chair and knocking him out. What's funny about the whole thing is, the day we both got released from the hospital I had Arn's boots by accident. I left them at the lobby. I saw Joey Maggs out there, and said, "Please tell Arn I'm sorry. Is he okay?" He said, "Yes, he's okay. He's hurt right now but he's going to be all right." I said, "Please tell him I'm sorry. I don't remember stabbing him. I'm sorry for it happening." He said, "Arn says he was so drunk he doesn't remember anything." This was the day afterwards. But when we get to the States and all of a sudden the possibility of Arn being fired for what he's done, Arn now is saying that I beat him up with a chair, and he regained consciousness from it, then stabbed me. That's a little hard to swallow.

I blame WCW for the perception. They're the ones that have let this drag out and they're the ones that have tarnished my name and who I am. Arn can make up his own stories and I can make my own stories up. But what are the facts? There was a chair found. The facts are, it was never used. That's what the English police say. The chair had no blood on it, had no dentations on it, or anything like that. What was true, me and Arn went to the hospital over scissor wounds. They were Arn's scissors and he brought them out of his room. I'm going to promise you one thing. If this thing goes to court, Arn will walk out a guilty man. I will walk out innocent on the fact that I defended myself.

Clark: How has all this affected you mentally, as far as your attitude towards the business and your overall outlook on life?

Eudy: I'm a person that never knows what the word quit is. I've been through a lot. I've been through a serious lung surgery where the doctor said I'd never make it back. I made it back. I went through a bad business decision when I went to the WWF and left what I think is the best company to work for as far as security. I think I came back from that and was doing pretty good. I've never been a quiter.

We all pay our dues in different ways. I feel like I've paid mine by getting up every morning at five o'clock and going to the gym. When I was at WCW, I did every personal appearance for them. I did all the important things for them that they couldn't get anyone else to do. I always carried myself as a professional and never let the company down. I feel like I've paid my dues. In a way, now I can't match the way people paid dues ten years ago, because the business has changed. That's not my fault. But we all pay our dues in our own ways. I feel like I've paid mine harder than most people.

I almost felt like at one point, that all the time all the effort of coming back from the serious injury, coming back from a bad business decision, coming back from all the different types of adversity, that this incident almost made me want to say the hell with it and just give up totally, while I was laying on this couch and couldn't move from pain. It wasn't really the physical pain, it was the mental pain that here I was once again so damn close to achieving what I know I should achieve this business. On rumors and false accusations, everything was take away from me. But instead of it doing that to me, that's just sometimes something a person like myself needs. That type of adversity to come back now, not from a physical injury, but one from letting everybody talk bad about you. It's funny, it was just the night of Halloween Havoc and that six weeks prior to that, of how "I was such a great guy. I was doing the right things for the company." You know what that was, that's when I was going through and doing jobs every night. They thought, "Boy, Sid's really changed." They forget I did jobs every night for them before. That's their idea of doing good. I had been told by Dusty Rhodes one night that I had rewrote the book of wrestling. I took that as a great compliment from the man. That was one of the greatest compliments I've ever had in my life. But I felt like it was a little true because I could feel it and I could see it. That to me is the reason I'll come back from this. Because I've just fought too hard to get to where I have and not to achieve what I should have achieved. The main thing I want to achieve more than anything, and that's what I was working at so hard, was to achieve respect from my peers. My peers are people that are in the same boat I'm in, in that we both have the same things to offer this business and we're both fighting for the same things.

Clark: How do you describe the validity of WCW's steroid testing?

Eudy: I do believe that they are very serious about it. I think it's something that needs to be done for the health and to relieve a lot of the pressures off guys who think they need them to be equal in this business or that it's going to take them somewhere further than they're going to get without them. I don't believe it will. For example, look at Ric Flair. He's achieved more than anybody else in our business and I've never known him to be a steroid user. But also to be fair to people who are using them, I don't think Flair could make it if he started his career today. If he was Ric Flair of young and was starting today, I don't think he'd get where he's gotten. It used to be if you were a great wrestler and could carry yourself with a great ring presence, that's what it took. It takes more than that now. Our fans demand more. Our fans demand a person who looks great athletically. This is a sport and people want to see people who look like they're in sports. Nothing against anyone or Ric, it's just that a lot of people that did great a long time ago wouldn't do great today. That's the way the business has gone.

Clark: Why did you not take part in WCW's steroid testing program?

Eudy: I did take it. The only reason I held out to take it as long as I did is because those people at WCW had never given me a contract. I was using that as a leverage to get my contract out of them. I still hadn't been signed and I still haven't signed one today. I've got the new contract they sent to me at my lawyer's office. That's what WCW's doing with this incident. They're using all this stuff against me to try to get my money or hold out on me. That's all they're doing.

They said whoever doesn't take the test will be fired. I never was worried about taking it. I welcome the steroid policy. That everybody's going to have to compete on equal terms. I don't think it's fair for one person to be able to take them or one person not have to take them. I just think if you're going to do it, make sure everyone does it. That's something I think that needs to be incorporated. Myself, I think I know the repercussions of steroids and what it can possibly do to you. But I think I blind myself from it because of looking at the next person who I know is on steroids, and him and I sort of fighting for a position. It's almost stupid to say, but I'm thinking, "If this guy's challenging me for a job and he's on them, he might have that more muscular look than me. Then I have to use them too." However, if we're both having to be tested and we're both going to have to come off of the them, then we'll all go compete on the same level. We'll be forced to.

I was the last person or one of the last to take the test. But I had missed the steroid tests the first couple times because they had me out of town doing p.r. work. Everytime we would go reschedule to do this thing, they had me doing something that day. They came to me and they said, "You need to take the test." I said, "Sure, I will. But I want my contract." They don't steroid test the guys who aren't full-time employees. I think if they want me to act as a full-time employee and go by the rules and the regulations, they're going to have to treat me like a full-time employee and give me my contract. That's something they said they were going to do for months and never did.

Clark: How do you feel about the charges that have been made against Vince McMahon and the situation with his company?

Eudy: I think it's got to be wrong. First of all, he just didn't need the money. Why would he have a wrestler go out and sell steroids to the wrestlers when the doctors are writing prescriptions for them. Everybody knows that. I knew about the doctor four years before I went in there, working a small territory down in Continental. I think of all the charges and all the accusations they've made about Vince, I think this is probably one of the stupidest ones they could have went after him for. I could be wrong. It could be that he did. But why? There's no reason for it. Even the dumbest of all people wouldn't do it.

Clark: How would you sum up your stint with WCW in 1993 and did you see the organization change since you were last there?

Eudy: It hasn't changed. They still do not take the time to do anything right. It's so obvious right now to the wrestling fan. Right before the incident with Arn, I was in the gym one time. One of the wrestling fans in the gym came to me. What happens is, not everybody can say tuned every Saturday for wrestling on television. The guy made a comment to me. He said, "It used to be that I could watch wrestling and maybe not see it for a week or so, tune back in and see the same storyline pretty much going on. But now it's just opposite." If a person misses wrestling one or two weeks, by the time they tune it back in, they've got a whole new storyline going. You don't have any time for the people to get it. Knowing from experience, it's easy for me to sit here and say that and it's easy for a lot of people to say that. But you also have to understand the pressures on the people in that office that they're going through to continuously come up with a different idea to boost ratings. I think that there's so many different ways you could do that without rushing it, by bringing along one or two more stories at the same time. Instead of just concentrating on one or two things, concentrate on three or four and bring them along not at the same time but one after another, with other people and other issues. There's just so many different ways to do it. I still think no one does that better than Vince, as far as the art of longevity. The art of giving wrestlers a longer life or involved in something longer.

WCW still doesn't do the simple things right yet. I noticed a lot of changes from when Gene Okerlund came in, just as far as the interviewing and that it had upscaled considerably. That's pretty much Gene probably letting onto them some of Titan's ideas about the way to do things. Gene probably was maybe part of giving Titan those ideas. Who knows? I know at least in the interview room and that part of it, they were doing some better things as far as getting some good quality interviews. Things like that were supposed to help them out a whole lot. But as far the houses, it really didn't help them. You could blame a thousand different things on it. I think the main thing you could blame it on is the storylines and the inconsistency, not staying with one and making one interesting enough for people to tune in for three or four weeks, and maybe using the right people in the storylines.

Clark: What do you see for the future of WCW right now with Ric Flair on top as the champion and the basic direction they're headed in?

Eudy: I couldn't give a good estimate because I'm not in there. As far as Ric Flair being on top, sometimes you have to go to a person who is used to the pressure and used to things being on top. But he's just too far gone. The thing about this business is, you get a run. The run only lasts for so long, and you slowly die down. If you don't even make changes so many times, like you can only be a villian one day and a hero the next so many different times. After so many times the people get tired of it. Really nothing but just time has been his enemy. It's all of our's enemy. It's going to hit us all. Nobody can fight that off. Nothing against Ric Flair, it's just Mother Nature and time, and our business has progressed to other things. It's not his fault, it's just time.

Clark: Well, Ric Flair, Big Van Vader, Sting, yourself, and anybody else can say that they are drawing money at WCW. But realistically, is there anyone at WCW who is making money for the company?

Eudy: Nobody's drawing money. I think there are people in there that could draw money. I think Rick Rude is a name you just left out. He is one of your potential bigger money drawers in there. People can say anything about him that they want, but the reason I say him is because his interviews are always good and they're always different. He works ten times harder than say Flair does in the ring. He works longer and nobody puts anymore time in the ring than he does. He works hard at every aspect of the business. I'm not saying he's overlooked or maybe not talked about enough, but he's one that you could talk about money with in there.

Sting is definitely somebody who could draw money in there. It's going to have to be with something in a different issue than he's been involved in. He's been a part of so many bogus things that meant nothing and a part of a lot of good things that never went anywhere with him. Not being his fault. The other thing is, it really might be time for a change for him. I think as far as appearance and the way he carries himself that there's not anybody more capable of doing it than him. He's a great person to work with. He's always open for ideas. He's just everything you want to see in a person put in a situation like that.

Van Vader, he could draw money and be a big part of drawing big money with the right person in the right situation. But it seems to me, just like the thing with Flair, God almighty, how can you build him to be the big monster killer person he is if he gets beat by their "senior citizen?" That's the truth. You have to tell the truth.

Myself, I don't know a 1,001 wrestling holds. I really have forgotten more holds or more wrestling maneuvers from when I first started than what I know now. Because I found out and we all find out you don't have to have all that to be a great worker, to have ring presence, or know psychology in the business. With the right person I could go thirty minutes. I proved that with Ricky Steamboat. I've carried a lot of time with a lot of different people.

But there's people in there that can do it. You've got to get behind them and do the right things. I don't know how much more abuse Vader can take before his drawing capabilities are over in there. But there's no one drawing any fuckin' money in there.

Clark: What do you think it is about Sid Eudy for all these unfortunate circumstances with your wrestling career to be happening with you?

Eudy: I think it's just bad luck. Again, what I thought I could do in this business, not from just on what I thought or my own feelings, but just by people in general. People like Sting, Dusty Rhodes, Vader, Ric Flair, Arn Anderson, Eric Bischoff, Ole Anderson. I could go on all day about people who I consider do know something about this business in different aspects, and they all had great things to say to my face about me. That I was a great person to work with. We're not going to always see eye to eye about everything, but I work my ass off to make the other person comfortable. I worked my ass off to make my bosses happy. I think the only thing I hate about it was I didn't get to do it long enough to make it concrete. Another six months, if this incident hadn't occurred, Sid would have never heard anything bad about him. Because I would have done so many more positive things for this business. The way it did happen, it's just bad timing. I think anybody if they have any honesty at all, and you ask them about me, and they might not be my friend, but they only can say the things that are true. That I am a hard worker. I've got a lot to offer to this business. When people like Dusty Rhodes, Greg Gagne, Fred Blassie, and all these people who have been in this business for years and years, when they look at you, and they say, "Boy, you are the hottest thing in this business," you hear it once, and it's something. But when you hear it a hundred different times from a hundred different people who do have some credibility in this business, you can't help but to believe it's a little bit true. I know I have something to offer to this business. I know that I can be one of the top if not the top persons in this business within the next couple of years. But you can't stay there forever. I think without a doubt I could put a name on this business that will stand right next to Hulk Hogan, Ric Flair, and Bruno Sammartino. He's another person who talked to me and only had great things to say.

Just like with this incident between me and Arn. Unless you know the truth and you're only hearing things that are hearsay and if you're dumb enough to judge a person by that, then that's your mistake. But if you do these things in this incident that happens like this and you don't judge a person and just wait till things are finalized and the truth comes out, you couldn't help say that, "Sid wasn't right for what he did over there. But Sid wasn't the one that was in the wrong either."

Clark: Do you think that these unfortunate circumstances especially this incident with Arn has hurt your future in the business in any way?

Eudy: No. I think because of the way things change so quickly and there's such a demand for people with talent in this business, it will be forgotten. I has hurt me within a short time period. It's already hurt me in this short time. I'm not really physically 100% to come back to work anyway, but I haven't got my job even if I was. It's hurt me a bit, but it's something that without a doubt I'll come back from. It will be forgotten.

Clark: In our last interview we talked about what you most regretted doing in your career. I'll ask that again, after this incident with Arn.

Eudy: The biggest mistake that I ever made was to go to the WWF on a person's word and what they were going to do for me, versus what WCW had done for me. What WCW had offered was guaranteed. That's still the worst thing I've ever done in my life, to make that move there too soon and to go on a person's word. I had heard all so many times that you couldn't believe his word. I was just caught up on the dream that I had. It was just a dream. I never thought I could have even gotten close to it. That was to be the top person in this business. The only way that you could ever be considered the top person in this business was to be in the WWF and be their top person. That's where all the money was. That's where all the fame and fortune was. That was the thing that gave you the key that opened up all your other dreams. Maybe if it was acting or anything you wanted, that's where it car from. I would probably do it again as I figure a person's got to chance . once in a while. That's still the biggest mistake I made in this business.

Clark: Do you consider the incident with Arn a major regret?

Eudy: No. I can't consider that a big regret because I had no bearing on the outcome. It's something I wouldn't take back. If I was attacked again by Arn, I'd do the same thing. I'm pretty sure I would. The only thing I wish I had done is once I felt the scissors were at the floor, I wish that whatever fear or whatever took over me, I could have gotten my senses back right then and just detained him another way. But human nature didn't allow me to do that. I don't regret that. I regret that it happened to him. I regret it happened to both of us, because Arn's been a pretty fair person to me. But if he had done the same thing to me, I'd do the same thing again. This here is going to be a short setback in my life and nothing like going to the WWF was. I had to change my name, and I still haven't gotten over that. That change and not being at the right time is more detrimental to a person than anything.

Clark: What do you see as your future plans for yourself, and regarding WCW and when you want to return to wrestling?

Eudy: My plan right now is to just get back to 100%. My plans are to still achieve my goals I had set in this business, either being in WCW or WWF. Whatever it takes me to prove to myself what I am all about, I'm not going to give up this profession yet on something like this. I was a lot closer to giving up after the WWF than the incident because of me having to sit out a year on a contract dispute. That right there was a lot harder on me than this. The main thing that hurts me on this is that I had just gotten so close to gaining the respect from the people I tho were important to gain respect from, and that I have lost a little bit of it maybe. I'd be glad to go back there to WCW. I never enjoyed working for a company more than them. I believe that it'll get worked out. If not, big deal. That's not in my hands. ******************************

INTERVIEW
TED DIBIASE

The following interview with Ted DiBiase, 39, was conducted via telephone from his home near Jackson, Mississippi on December 18, 1993. DiBiase, born to wrestlers Mike DiBiase and Helen Hild, has been in the wrestling business for nineteen years.

John Clark: What was it like for you being raised by two parents who were working in the wrestling business?

Ted DiBiase: I would think that as a child growing up, since it's all I knew, at that time I didn't see it as being out of the ordinary. As an adult looking back and looking at the "normal way" that kids are brought up and raised--you know, you're born in the city, you're raised in the city. You know everybody in the neighborhood. That's the way it is when you grow up and you go to school. Most of your friends you've known since you were a child. Wherein the wrestling business at that time I spent almost my entire life traveling, kind of like a career soldier transferred from time to time. Like all those kid army brats. "Where did you grow up?" "Oh, I was an army brat. I grew up here and I grew up there. My dad was stationed here, my dad was stationed there." Well, similar. I went to kindergarten in southern Arizona. First grade in Portland, Oregon. Second grade in Houston, Texas. Third grade in Wilcox, Arizona. Fourth and fifth grade in Omaha, Nebraska. Sixth grade in Amarillo, Texas. Seventh, eighth, and ninth grade in Omaha, Nebraska. I had gone back to Texas the summer between my freshman and sophomore year. I was fifteen at the time. That's when my father died. He had a heart attack in the ring in Lubbock, Texas. Then I went back to southern Arizona and finished high school there. Then went to college in Texas.

To give you a little background with my mother and father, Mike DiBiase is actually my stepfather. Both were married previously and they were both divorced. They both had different families before. My mother met my dad when she was working in the business. When they married, one of the requirements was that she quit and be a housewife. Which is what she did.

It was different in that traveling I guess became easier for me. It's like you uproot, let's say for example, my kids, who have spent the majority of their life here in Mississippi. If I was to uproot the younger ones now and move us to Florida or somewhere else, it would be traumatic for a while because they have so many friends here. But me as a child growing up, I was in a place for a year or so, and then gone. It made it easier for me to meet people. Even to this day, it's very easy for me to go somewhere and to meet people, and feel comfortable. It's easier for me to feel comfortable in an area that I don't well because I'm adaptable to it. I would say that would be an advantage. The fact that I got to see so much of this country growing up is an advantage. To compare the different cities, the little cultural differences within our own country--people are a certain way in certain areas and do certain things--that was an advantage. Disadvantage being like, "Where's home?"

My family home was Omaha, Nebraska. My dad was born and raised there. I never referred to him as my stepfather because from the time I was four on, he's the father that I knew and he raised me. I'm as much Italian as if I were full-blooded. He was a great man. All my life I have met people who knew my father, and they go out of their way to tell me what a great guy he was. Not just as an athlete, but as a person and what a great guy he was. I'm really appreciative of that. Very rigid, the old European upbringing, very strong, close knit family. That's kind of the Italian way. You know, every Sunday is spaghetti! He was a national AAU heavyweight wrestling champion at the University of Nebraska. One of four athletes in the history of the school to letter eight times in varsity sports. Four years in football, four years in wrestling. Had he not injured his knee in football, he would have gone on and been part of the American U.S. Olympic wrestling team. He wrestled as Iron Mike DiBiase. The story of where he got that name is because of that knee injury. At the time they didn't nearly know medically what they know now or what they can do for you know. The doctor told him if he worked real hard he would probably be able to walk normally again, but that he would never participate in competitive athletics again. Well, the next year he was back out on the football field. Thus, he was named Iron Mike, and went on to wrestle professionally for I guess some twenty years until he died of a heart attack in the ring at the age of forty-five in Lubbock, Texas.

Clark: How did it effect you as a kid to have your father die because of a wrestling related injury and how has it effected you in your life?

DiBiase: I guess the shock of it, is I guess the hardest thing. When you've had a father that was the type of athlete that my father was--healthy all his life, hardly ever sick a day in his life. You don't realize how young forty-five is until you're almost there yourself. To realize his life was cut short--when you're fifteen looking at forty-five, you know it's young, but you don't think it's *young*. When you're almost forty looking at forty-five, you go wow, half of his life was not even over. The shock factor was the biggest thing to me. It was like, here was this man that I put so much value in and so much love in, and need for him--I was right at that age where a father and a son start to become close. More like buddies, because of the athletics and those problems that you go through as an adolescent when you turn to Dad, and say, "Hey, Dad, what do I do?" All of a sudden, he was gone. It was the shock of it that was the hardest thing for me. As far as it being wrestling related, he died doing what he loved to do. I couldn't see him growing old and being in a wheelchair, or not being able to get around. That wasn't his style. It wasn't his way. It was probably better that he went that way. It wasn't as a result of something that was done to him in a match. He didn't take a bad fall. Nobody fell on him or anything like that. It's just in the course of this match, he had a heart attack. This was July 2, 1969, and he was wrestling a guy they used to call Man Mountain Mike, a big guy. He threw my father out on the floor. He got back up, got in, and went back out on the floor. They said he got up and started to pull himself into the ring, and then he just fell back to the floor. At that time, you had a twenty count to get back in the ring. I believe it was a ten count on the apron and a twenty count on the floor. He was counted out. Obviously, that wasn't what was supposed to happen. Harley Race, who I consider a friend and one of the greats in our business, who helped me tremendously in the early years of my career, was there. He ran down to ringside and administered first aid to my father. He in fact kept him alive until the ambulance arrived. They got him to the hospital, and he died on the table. It was just the shock factor. As far as it happening in the ring and in front of a crowd, there's no ill feeling. It was just one of those things.

Clark: Did his death give you any second thoughts about entering the wrestling business?

DiBiase: Not so much me, my mother. My mother, and to be very honest with you, my father as well, didn't want any of us to be in the wrestling business. Reason being, the lifestyle. Not so much the physicalness of it or any of that. My dad was very much the athlete. To be real honest with you, had my dad lived I probably never would have been a wrestler. It would have been one of those deals like, out of respect for him and, "Over my dead body, you're not going to do it." "Okay, Dad." Once he was gone, it was like, "Dad, it was good enough for you, and you were a great man." It's kind of one of those things, you're born into it, you were raised around that group of people. I always had the desire to try it. But I promised my mother that I would complete school. I set my goals; my dad being gone and everything, if I'm going to go to college I'm going to do it on a scholarship. I was very much into football. I was an All-State offensive and defensive lineman in Arizona in high school. Originally, I had signed a scholarship to play football at the University of Arizona. Then the wrestling came along one day.

It was a tape out of Amarillo, Texas, and there was Dory and Terry Funk. I hadn't seen these guys in three years. Dory Funk Sr. and my father were very good friends. Dory Jr. and Terry, especially Terry, have been very close friends of mine, in a sense almost like brothers. So I went to see them and they asked me to just come back and take a look at West Texas State, if for nothing else to just take the recruiting trip and to come back and see my friends. I got back there and I got around those people, and decided that's what I wanted. I was coming out of a small school, and thinking I'm going to get a better shot at it here. West Texas was a reputable school football-wise at the time. But it wasn't a monster school like Arizona. So I thought I would have a better chance of making up for the things I had missed out on by not being in a large high school. That, plus the wrestling.

I always had in the back of my mind that I wanted to give this business a try. At the end of my junior year I went to Louisiana, in 1975. I was just going to spend the summer, (laughs) try it on and see if I liked it. I trained some with Dory and Terry. A Japanese wrestler by the name of Jumbo Tsuruta, who was a young guy in the business and wrestling in that area at that time, he helped me considerably at the time. Anyway, that summer I tried it on, and I never went back. On the one hand I do regret that. I was a year away from graduating from college, and I didn't go back. I've got three boys, and irregardless of what they choose to do in life, I just ask that they complete their education. It's so much more important now to have an education. I've been very fortunate in the business, much more fortunate than a lot of guys. Believe me, over the years I've seen a lot of guys with a lot of talent who just never got a break. The old saying in this business is, being at the right place at the right time. It's so true. It's not always your talent that gets you a position. Very evident these days.

Clark: Were there any other fields you were considering going into, or was wrestling simply the career you had set for yourself?

DiBiase: In college I was headed towards coaching and teaching. I think more than any other reason is because my favorite uncle, who played some baseball with the St. Louis Cardinals organization, he was the head baseball coach and head wrestling coach at Alhambra High School in Phoenix, Arizona. They had a lot of state championships there. He was one of those people I looked up to. He was a coach and a teacher. My older brother went on not to coach, but to teach. So I just kind of felt like I was going to fall into that thing, and keeping me around sports. Then after talking to them and realizing that coaches, and teachers if they don't get to the professional level, don't make a lot of money. They work hard and they struggle, and their rewards are slim. Overworked and underpaid. I felt like that was going to be there for me to fall back on. The other thing that I minored in was speech. My biological father was a singer. He had a very beautiful, deep, base voice. He was a regular on the old *Tennessee Ernie Ford Show*. That's where this very deep voice of mine comes from. I've had people over the years tell me, "Ted, you've got to do something with that voice. You've got a great voice." Dick Ebersol, who is now the head guy at NBC Sports and before he used to produce *Saturday Night's Main Event*, when he left, he said, "Gosh, Ted, when you get through wrestling, you've got to give me a call. Man, you've got a great voice." That's something that we can get into later, but it's something that I'm looking into, even now.

I guess all in all, I knew that I was at least going to give wrestling a try. I knew it was something that if I just did what my dad had wished and left it alone, that it would always have bugged me. After I got that first summer wrestling in what became the Bill Watts empire later--when he was partners with old LeRoy McGuirk--that summer I did well and was encouraged by a lot of the guys in the business at that time. They said, "Ted, you've got a great career ahead of you." Plus, here I had been this college student making no money and living in a dorm, and all of a sudden I had some money in my pocket. Back then, gosh, making $200 or $300 a week, I thought I was rich. Anyway, that's where it started. I called the coaches at the end of the summer, and I said, "I'm sorry, I've found what I'm going to do and I'm staying with it." I guess the rest is history.

Clark: Who were some of the people that you admired growing up and when you were starting out in the business?

DiBiase: My dad, number one. If you talk to people and if you talk to the older people in this business, you'll find that my father was very well respected. Not only as a great amateur wrestler, but also as a great pro. He had great ring psychology. He's one of those guys that can get the very most out of just a little bit. I can't say that I patterned myself after him because I didn't really study the business when he was wrestling. I can remember styles of a couple guys. One guy in particular who I watched later who's style reminded me of my father's, is a guy named Bob Sweethand. In the business he was a great worker. Dick Murdoch, one of the best. Karl Cox, one of the very best. Dory and Terry Funk, without a doubt.

To this very day, every business decision that I have made in wrestling, whether I've already made my mind up of what I was going to do, I always talked it over with Terry Funk. It's kind of like, even though I knew I wanted to do it and even if I knew it was right, I wanted to at least hear Terry say he agreed with me. I respect Terry Funk to this day as one of the smartest guys in this business. He's a great idea guy. He's got great vision. Back in the 70s when I was in college or when I was first breaking into this business, Terry Funk predicted what Vince McMahon did. He didn't know who was going to do it, but he told me way back then where the business was headed and what it was evolving to, that somebody would go nationwide and then worldwide. Everything that he's told me about the business and where it was headed has all happened. In his own working style, I think Terry was ahead of his time. He's always been ahead of his time. He's kind of wild and unorthodox, but I'm going to tell you and I don't think anybody can disagree with me, when the bell rings and Terry goes to work, you get what you pay for. You always get what you pay for. You always get excitement and you always get a heck of a match. He would probably be one of my tops.

Dory Jr., technically one of the greatest. Some of the greatest matches that I've ever seen to this very day were Jack Brisco and Dory Funk Jr., when they were going back and forth; like Dory had the belt, Jack had the belt. Another one at the very top of that same list in that same category would be Harley Race. Great ring psychology. There's a little mix there--some of those guys are back in my dad's era, and Dory and Terry are the next generation after that.

Among my own peers, without a doubt, one of my good friends, Ric Flair. He has probably done technically better in wrestling than anybody else in this era. Now as far as consistency and all that, I've heard a lot of guys say Ric got pretty repetitive. Well, I think we all do. From time to time, we all get repetitive. Especially when there's nothing to excite you. Nothing to get you excited about the business when what you see happening around you is all wrong, and you know it's all wrong. You're forced to go out and perform or try to make something out of nothing, virtually, at times. It's very hard to have your heart in it. I think that's what happened to Ric. I know there's been times with me and that's happened. I guess those would be the top. I'm sure there's others, and I hate to leave anybody out that I really think is great that's helped me.

I always have tried to stay objective in this business. Something that Dory Funk Sr. said a long time ago, and always hung true not only in wrestling, but I would say in life. He said, "Don't ever think that you've gotten so good, that you've learned it all. That you've arrived." Like, "Okay, I've mastered it. I'm here. I can relax now." He said, "You learn everyday, every night. You have to keep an open mind to learn, because the business is constantly going to evolve. It's going to change. You're going to learn. If you quit learning, then you become stagnant. Then you've really become repetitive, and it's the same old thing, same old thing."

I've always accepted criticism. I invite criticism because it's one thing to be out there doing it and feeling it, and then to have somebody else on the outside watching. There's times when I've come out of a ring thinking, "Man, that was the shits. That was terrible." And everybody goes, "Hey, that was great. That was okay." You feel a match one way, and then when you watch it on television or a tape, you look at it and it's different than the way you see yourself in your mind. So I've always tried to stay objective. And I think that's helped me.

Clark: Who were some of the main people that you learned the basics from and the psychology part of it from?

DiBiase: I was really fortunate when I started there in Louisiana, when I was working for Bill. The talent that came through there at that time was just very good. I didn't realize until later how good I had it.

Like Dick Murdoch, a great hand. Dick is great in that he never takes himself too serious, and he has fun and he enjoys life. That's the way he is. And sometimes that carried over to his work. If there was anything in wrestling that I would say hurt Dick, it would be that there were times when he was clowning around and entertaining the boys too much, and not taking care of business enough. Other than that, Dick Murdoch could have just as easily been one of the world champions. He was that good. This business came so easy to him. I see guys now that have to sit down and they think, and they've got it mapped out from A to Z before they ever walk through the door. Dick Murdoch could walk in the door, put on his stuff, and walk through the door and go in the ring, and give you a masterpiece every time. Not even think about it. He's that good. So is Terry. So is Dory. Brisco's good. Bill Watts is a great mind in the business. He's schooled under Eddie Graham. Psychology-wise, I learned a lot from those people.

Bill Watts probably had one of the greatest territories in the business. The Mid South territory and Charlotte were probably the two hottest. Consistently every week. Guys would come through there--Dick Murdoch, Karl Cox, Pat O'Connor. I was exposed to him some. I had the opportunity of working with him a couple of times. He's a guy who could maneuver you in and out of holds and you wouldn't know how you got there. Dory, Dory Jr., and Terry Funk, been in the ring with those guys. Dick Slater was another one. Great worker. Flair, him and I have done a number of hour matches. Gosh, it's been so long. Both of us were like, "Man, we'd love to do it again." I would say those were probably the key guys.

Clark: Did you find that most people were there to help you in advancing your career?

DiBiase: Yeah. It's just funny, because another thing that was taught to me--I think it's not only true in wrestling, but almost in any business--everybody thinks you're a great guy and everybody is more than willing to help you and teach until you become a threat. Once they realize, "Hey, this guy is really good," and they realize that the more they teach you, the better you're becoming, to the point where you being good may at some point threaten their job and their position, then they quit helping you. That's not a negative statement. That's almost like self-preservation. It's like, "Okay kid, I've taken you this far. I'm going to let you do the rest of it on your own." It only makes sense. That's kind of the way the business.

Clark: Has that changed today with the younger guys coming in. Do you think that there's people as eager as they used to be to help these younger athletes coming in?

DiBiase: Yes and no. The business has changed *so* much that I don't even look at it as the same business anymore. It's evolved into a different cat, a different animal. Way back even when I was a kid, and I would go in the dressing room with my father, this is before, I'm just allowed to walk in and sit down. I sat there and I did not speak unless I was spoken to. There was a time in the business when you were breaking in and you were in the business, that with the older guys, same thing. It's a respect thing. It's not only true in our business, it's true in this country. I've had guys break in who are guys that I'm going to wrestle on TV with, who are coming up to me and telling me that they'd like to do this and like to do that. I'm shaking my head, and I'm going, "Look, I've been in this business ten, fifteen years. And you're going to tell me what you want to do. Show me some respect here, buddy." When you break into something and you think you know what you're doing when you don't, well, you're just foolish.

Another misconception by a lot of guys, they have a preconceived thing like, Wrestling is a show, therefore I just have to look good and the rest of it's easy." Wrong. Just look at me. God knows if having a great body is what it takes to be a success in this business, I'd be a poor man. I'm no fool. I look in the mirror and I see what's really there. An athlete that's got small arms and if anything, an average body. Believe me, we were taught that. When I was breaking in and I got out of college, I was in pretty good shape. It was like, "Don't turn into a musclehead and spend all your time in a gym. Learn your trade. Learn the business." Of course, I could have a little more time in the gym! I'm not categorizing. There's a lot of guys in the business that have great bodies that are good workers. But there have been guys that I've seen get in the business and who feel like because they have that body--and I respect that too, because it takes a lot of discipline to get to look that way--but they feel like because they've got that, that that's all they need, and that's what they've got to take care of the most, and the rest of it is not that necessary, secondary to that. That's not true. That's one of the things that's hurt the business.

A lot of things hurt the business. I can remember the first meeting I had with Vince McMahon. I just told him, I was very honest and I said, "Vince, I thought you were killing our business." This is before I came on as the "Million Dollar Man." Looking at it now, I may have been right. It had to evolve. I'm not knocking Vince in that way. It had to evolve. I think that there were a few things that Vince did that took it way too far. You want to entertain the people. Again, this is just my feeling, and I've voiced it through Vince. What I heard was, "Ted, you're just thinking old school. You're thinking old school." Like I just couldn't kick that old school. I'm not saying that he's wrong, and I'm right. Let's take all the problems that he's having now out of picture. I really believe that had all this pressure and all this investigation that's going on and all these allegations, if all this bad press hadn't come along when it did, that his business would be much healthier than it is right now. I think it's got a major role in his business dropping off as bad as it has. To be honest with you, I don't know the state of his business right now. I don't know how good or bad it is because I haven't been in communication with him. I hope for the best. I want to see the business survive. But I just feel like there were times when it went too far. My attitude is, the marquis still reads wrestling. Educated people come up to me and say, "We know that wrestling is entertainment..." Vince came right out and said that it's sports entertainment. When you go to a movie, when you walk in that movie, you know it's a movie. It may be based on fact, but it's a movie. But it's the job of the actors and the characters in that movie to for those two hours you're there, make that as real and as believable as they possibly can. That's what draws you there. That's what makes you go and pay your money. Or you watch a soap opera on TV. Wrestling's like a soap opera. What keeps you interested, what keeps you coming back; what are they going to do next? Surprising the people. I think one of the greatest things I was a part of since I was with the WWF was the deal with Hulk and Andre and the two Hebner brothers. What a big shock. What you want to think when you're programming this is, "What can we do to make the people go, 'Wow, can you believe that?'" Just really shock them. We don't shock them anymore. It's gotten to be like the old cookie cutter; it's like same old thing, same old thing, same old thing. It's got to constantly change. I'm the first one to say, gosh, I don't know. As a promoter, I don't know, where do you go? How do you make it better? How do you keep them interested?

You have to change talent. That's a problem we're running into now too. It used to be, when I was breaking in, you got in the ring, and I could every night, and I could go a minimum of twenty minutes out there with somebody who was accomplished enough, maybe not the greatest, but knew how to work. It's that night after night, that's where you learn. You learn in the ring. You can learn to take the best bumps, throw a great punch, and do all that stuff, but if you don't learn timing, if you don't learn psychology, all of that means nothing. I mean a big, fat zero. They used to have guys say, "You've got to listen to the people." I was like, "What do you mean, listen to the people?" I bet you there's guys out there right now that are breaking into the business or been in the business a couple years, and they're going to read this interview, and they're going to go, "What's he talking about?" You listen to the people. Every crowd responds differently. You have hard crowds, you have easy crowds. It's the art of the business, it's your ability as a worker to orchestrate those people. To bring them up, and sit them down. Stand them up, and sit them down. Take them right to that peak of explosion, and then take it away from them, and then, bang, give it to them again. There's just very few guys left in the business that have that knowledge, that have that workmanship. It's not the guys breaking in now, it's not necessarily their fault either. It's the way the business has evolved.

We have all these supershows now. You go to a wrestling card and there's seven, eight, nine matches on a card. You can't keep the people there for three hours every time. A two, two and a half hour show, you have guys going out there, and they can't go more than eight, ten minutes. Not enough time. When there were territories all over the country and there were places for guys to go and really learn and groom; where you could spend more time and where you only had five matches on the card at night. You were on TV every week and you had the opportunity to interview. You'd have guys wrestling in territories like Portland, Oregon, Fritz Von Erich's down in Dallas, Dory Funk Sr.'s territory up in Amarillo, Florida, Carolinas, Atlanta, Minneapolis. There were all these smaller places where you could go. If you still want to call New York the mecca, I don't know. That's not necessarily true. Before any of those guys got there and got their big break in New York, they were somewhere else. There's nowhere to go. There's not enough guys left that are teachers that have the time. I've tried to help a lot of guys. But how much time do I have to help them? I can't remember the last time I went over thirty minutes. Most of the matches we have are ten, fifteen minutes. I really can't remember the last hour I did. That was a long time ago. But those are the matches where you really learn, because you know you're going to be out there, and you've got to think. You've got to keep the people interested. It's not easy. I'm not going to name names, but there's some guys that I worked with in WWF who were big stars and were really talented, that I have a lot of admiration for, but was shocked when I realized that unless I sat down with them and went over the thing step by step from opening bell to closing bell, that they wouldn't get it. It was like, wow. Or guys who were good that if I would feel something in a match and want to change course, it would throw them all off. They couldn't do it. It confused them. It's just what it's evolved to. It's nobody's fault. You can't put blame any one place. I don't think you can.

I think some things from a business aspect or a promotional aspect could have helped. It's kind of late for that now, as far as taking guys and making them work from the bottom up. Make them earn the position. They still do in Japan. Japan's business is very healthy. Very healthy now. The other thing is, there's only two wrestling hours on TV in Japan. All Japan and New Japan. There's a lot of companies. There's only two hours of wrestling on every week. The ratings are high. The ratings now in the States are terrible. Why? It's oversaturated. My gosh, there's just like twenty or thirty hours of wrestling. It's just too much. Not only is it too much, but most of it is crap. Most of it is bad. That's got to change. Oversaturation. Oversaturation. I can identify a lot of problems. But you say, "Well, those are the problems, Ted. What do you do about it?" I don't know. I really don't know. I don't know if it's reversible. But I know when I look at the work ethic in Japan, they break young guys in and they make them work. Irregardless of how good they might be, they make them wait. They make them work underneath and they slowly build them. By the time they get that break, they're totally appreciative of it. That's another thing in the business today.

If I want to find a fault not only with wrestling promoters but with American business period, we're all looking for the quick dollar. What can we make right now? What can we make today? What can we make tomorrow? But nobody here stops to think about what it's going to cost us next year or ten years from now, to make that quick buck now. You can look right at the wrestling business in the United States, the car industry. Just name the businesses. All these people are complaining, "Quit buying Japanese products. We've sold out to Japan." I've owned three Japanese-built cars. Why? Best car on the road. I'll tell Lee Iacocca, "You want me to buy an American made car? Build one that's better than theirs. Build one that's going to last me five or six years and not fall apart in three." That's what our country has done. It's like, "Gosh, if we don't build it as good and it falls apart in a couple years, well, by Gosh, then they've got to buy another one." The extreme, I guess. But I think it overrides in our business. A promoter's saying, "We could package this guy this way. He's not really ready, but we can do this and do that. We can make this now." Everything that starts out real good, they run it to death. Europe or some market that they've never been to, they'll go to and the first time they go in there the place is packed. Instead of waiting six months or even a year in a small place to come back, man, they're right back there. Pretty soon, they've run the thing so many times that they're doing good if they can get half a crowd in the building. It's that American capitalism greed. How do you change it? I don't know. You go back.

I can remember some conversations that I had with Vince or Pat Patterson. They would say, "Old school, old school, old school. Football's evolved." The passing game and the strategies involved, and people are faster, and the game is faster. But you know what, it's still football. It's still blocking and tackling. The wrestling business has evolved. They've added the music and the fancy costumes, and a lot of the flash. But it's still good versus evil. That's real basic. Good versus bad. Ultimately, you want good to win.

For me to be having this interview with you, ten years ago, it never would have happened. If you'd have told me ten years ago I was going to do an interview and be as open about the business as I am right now, I'd have told you that you were crazy. But the people that are going to read this are people that love our business anyway. That's another thing that my father told me about work ethic. He said, "You go out there and you give it your best every night. When the building is only a quarter-full, give it your best match because the people that showed up when it was raining, when it was snowing, and when all conditions were bad, the people that show up, that smallest crowd are your really hardcore fans that are going to be there whenever. Those are the ones that deserve you best." I agree with that. I'm human, I have my moments where I was either sick, or felt bad. Different things in life make you can't always perform at your peak. If there's anything that I can say, and I don't think too many people would argue with it, th most all the time I gave it everything. It wasn't always great, but tha was all I had!

If there was a way to change, I would say bring the respectability back. That comes from the guys higher up too. It's got to start at the office level. You see matches where you see too much. Everything used to build to the main event. It was just a rule. You couldn't have two guys fighting on the floor in the first three or four matches. No punches thrown in the first or second or third match. Everything was in the ring. Definitely don't pick up a chair or anything else. My gosh, now, by the time the main event goes on, they've seen everything five or six times. Nobody's minding the store. Nobody's really taking care of it and being more selective about the people you let in. You can go back to promotion again, an easy buck. "This guy's real good and he's been around. To keep him around I've got to pay him, more. So I'll take this guy, and he's not that good, but he's hungry. I don't have to pay him as much." Again, you're talking to a guy who's never been on the other side of it. I mean, I've never sat in Vince McMahon's chair. I have never been on the promotion side. I try to understand and try to be objective to what their problems are what they can do to solve them. When you're one of the guys and you're looking out for your living and your family, you're thinking me, me, me. How's this going to affect me? How's this going to affect me? Not, "How is this going to affect the company? How is it going to affect the big picture?" So I don't want to just say it's all the promotion's fault. It's not. There's reasons for everything. But that's where it's got to start. If there's going to be a change, it's got to start there. It's got to take that nose-dive. It's kind of like a rebuilding thing. It's got to take that nose-dive and everybody's got to kind of suck it up, and go, "Okay, we're going to start over and we're going to make it right, and make it go this time."

Everybody says the mystique has been taken out. Even your hardcore fans used to go, "That's not real, and that's not real. But those two guys in that main event, they're going to kill each other." Now it's like, the real wrestling fan understands the business and they try to find out all they can about it inside and out. But they still go, because they're into it. There into it until the end of the story. Everybody is a critic, like, "They should have done this, they should have done that. What are they going to do?" They can talk about it, but they're into it. You want to get everybody into it. The thing is, don't insult people's intelligence. Give them the characters, but make them as real as you can and believable as you can. So for the two hours that those people are sitting there, even though they know that they're seeing a show, they're into it because you're making it as real as possible. That's something that I feel like I was always able to do as that character. The "Million Dollar Man" was a character, but when I pulled off that suit I was a wrestler. It's like, "DiBiase, he's the guy we love to hate." When I walked through that curtain, I wanted them to boo me out of the building. That's like music to my ears. That's what I got paid to do.

The other thing I feel like they do is, they rush everything now. They don't build any stories. They don't drop a subtle hint here or there. It's like, boom, they throw it at you. It's just too quick. It's kind of like you might see some little something on TV one week and you just look over it, and then some little something happens the next week. Then four weeks down the road, what happened four weeks ago all of a sudden hits you. And you go, "Wow, that's what was going on." They don't do it anymore. They don't take the time to build. Those long-term building programs are always the ones that draw big money. Talent-wise, it's hard now. You've got a handful of guys that really know how to go. And you've got blind leading blind, which makes it hard.

Clark: Did you ever feel you had to live up to any expectations because you were a second generation wrestler?

DiBiase: No, and I'll tell you why. Because my father made it very clear to me that I wasn't expected to live up to him. As a matter of fact my dad's philosophy with us was--here he was a national collegiate champion, all-everything in Nebraska, had a big name professionally in the state of Nebraska--he always said, "Don't feel for a minute that you have to be a football player or be a wrestler, and follow in my footsteps to make me proud of you. I don't expect that. Whatever it is you choose to be in life and whatever way you choose to go, you be the very best you can be at whatever it is. It's got to come from your heart. As long as it comes from your heart and you're willing to make the sacrifices necessary to obtain that goal, I'll be proud of you." That's what I tell my kids. So just because I happened to choose that field, I realized I was going to go out and going to try to be the best I can be. I wanted to live up to his name, because I was proud of it, and I was proud of who he was, and I was proud that I was his son. I wanted to live up to that name. But I knew that I wanted to have my identity. I never once said, "I deserve a break because I'm Mike DiBiase's kid." It's even harder if you've got a father who was famous. My father wasn't the same as like a Sammartino or anything. But regionally and in the places where he was, he was very well known. Within the frame work of the business he was very well known. So I knew that to bust out I had to make my own name and my own personality. So that's the way I looked at it.

Clark: In the early stages of your career, what do you think was the thing that put Ted DiBiase on the map and maybe separated yourself from your father, creating your own identity?

DiBiase: I think the first real break I got was in St. Louis, which was considered the mecca of wrestling back then. You were in all the magazines. Everybody found out about you. All the promoters found out about you. Sam Muchnick gave me one of my first breaks. As far as what made me different; the advice that I got early on was, "Watch everybody. If you see something you like that you want to put in your repertoire, do it. But make it your own. Do it your way." That was just the attitude I took. I've always opened to criticism. Where a lot of guys are like, "Who's this guy think he is telling me...?" The thing is, you take all the criticism, and what you feel is good, you keep, and what you don't, you just let it go through. But I always maintained that respect for the guys that had been there before me. That, I believe, is what got me there. As long as I kept that respect. I hear these guys, "They're on top. Why are they there?" They're trying to help me. Obviously, they know what they're talking about. So I'm going to listen. That's what helped me get there. But the first big break was St. Louis. I went in there at the right place at the right time. They liked me and they knew they wanted to do something with me, but I was still young. It was just like it wasn't time yet, because there were other guys in those positions. The one day, Bruiser Brody didn't show up. Dick Murdoch didn't show up. Dick Slater was there from Atlanta, and he wasn't going to be able to come back, and he was the Missouri champion at the time. Nobody else that they were pushing at the time was there to take the belt from him. They said, "Guess what, Ted? You're going to become the Missouri champion today." I took the Missouri title from Dick Slater and then went on to have a little program with Dick Murdoch. Then my first big main event was with Harley Race when he was the world champion, at the Kiel Auditorium. Sold out the Kiel and then I came back again on another one and sold out what is now The Arena. The run through St. Louis gave me my first opportunity to go to New York, because Vince McMahon Sr. learned about me through Sam Muchnick. That's when I went up to New York the first time. Vince brought me in as the first North American champion. The history of that was, Vince found out that Bill Watts in the Mid South territory had a North American champion. He didn't want to have two, so he changed the name of that title to the Intercontinental. That's how that happened. So I was technically the first Intercontinental champion.

Clark: Why was stint with the WWWF in the late 70s so brief?

DiBiase: It was just kind of the way things were back then. You come in and you stay for maybe a year, and then you go, and you come back again. Tito got a break. We came there together. He got a break with Putski with the tag team deal. I think more than anything that was the one time it was more important even then in New York, to have a body. I didn't have that body. If you look at pictures of me then, I still looked like a little kid. I think they were surprised. They had heard about my work and the business I did in St. Louis. I came in there, and they're like, "Wow, what happened to this guy?" So I think that hurt me a little bit the first time around.

Clark: Did you find any differences with their New York based regional promotion and the other territories you had been working for?

DiBiase: The work was easier. I worked a lot in the South. I guess the work that I was used to was more solid. I'm not trying to be real critical as New York's always done great business. I think it was a little easier to see through it than what I had been used to. You just didn't seem to have to work as hard. Maybe that was it. Maybe you didn't have to work as hard to get the people.

Clark: Do you think maybe that was a case of the New York territory evolving at a faster rate than the rest of the country?

DiBiase: Could be. Yeah, could be.

Clark: Did you think anything of it when you wrestled Hulk Hogan as a heel in his first match at Madison Square Garden in the WWWF?

DiBiase: No. I knew that Vince Sr. saw big money in the guy. Of course, nobody at that time realized how much. I was leaving and he was coming in. It was his first appearance in the Garden, and he wanted me to make it a good one. I felt privileged that Vince picked me to work with him. It was kind of funny, cause back then they come up to you right at the last minute and say, "Well, this is what we want you to do." I went to Vince, and said, "What do you want me to do with this guy?" It was a really respectable thing to me, Vince Sr. said. He said, "Ted, you figure it out and do it the way you want to do it, because I know you'll do it right." Great compliment. So we got together on it and it worked out fine. The one thing I'll say about Hulk, he never forgot it. He's that kind of guy.

Clark: How were your trips to Japan in the early 80s influential to your career and did any of your opinions about the business change after going over there?

DiBiase: It just intensified some of the feelings that I had, even today. I could see the difference even then in the regiment and the strictness of how they handled their young talent and work. They took business very seriously. Even now, business over there is very snug. They make their guys work harder as far as getting to a point where they appreciate what they've been given. There's a lot of guys that get in a position that haven't worked hard enough to appreciate what they've been given. Over there, they all do. By the time they get in a position, they've paid their dues and they appreciate it. But what they're doing a lot there too, maybe some other guys have already been in a debate over. Or like as people say, "Ted, the business evolves. It's just not the same now." It's kind of like, you look at the matches that my dad had, and there's not nearly as much bumping as there is now and what I was doing. But see, now it's even going further. Well, how far can it go? I mean, I'm watching matches and guys are taking fifteen piledrivers and twenty suplexes in a match. I used to go out and watch a match to see what everybody was doing so I would try not to do the same thing. It's impossible now. That would be the criticism. The criticism, it's here, but even more there. I mean, golly, it's just like twenty-five false finishes, a guy gets brainbustered off the top rope, kicks out, and they beat him with a small package. I mean give me a break. It's just too far.

Clark: You achieved great success on a regional basis in the UWF in the 80s and just as well after you turned face in the match with Ric Flair. What made you decide to leave and go to the national WWF?

DiBiase: To go back a little further, I did well regionally here. I spent a lot of time in this area; in Louisiana, Arkansas, Mississippi. Junkyard Dog was the hottest item Bill ever had. At one time his two top faces were JYD and myself. Paul Orndorff had been through here and was leaving. The Samoans had been through. Bill said to me, "Man, we've got to have us a good, tough, strong heel." He wanted me to look around. I got to thinking about it. Man, one day it just hit me. I said, "Golly. Me." With the relationship JYD and I had had, who would ever think that I'd turn on him. I had always been a face there. I said, "All these people would just be shocked." When I told Bill, he was like, "My eyes lit up, boy, dollar signs." That without a doubt was one of the greatest runs I ever had, until I went to the WWF. The culmination to that, when the rest of the country started finding out about what was Mid South wrestling, which became the UWF, was when I did that deal with Flair and turned back face. I had that run there. Steve Williams and I were partners for a long time. The main reason for me and Steve Williams is Bill Watts gave Doc to me, and said, "Teach him how to work. Groom this guy." So I did. Did a pretty good job too. Doc's turned into a heck of a hand.

But it was just getting to the point there where Bill Dundee had come in and booked for Bill, and really had a lot of success. I think it was kind of like too much. It was always a good, solid foundation that was built there. I just felt like it got hotshotted too much, to where they saw gimmick match after gimmick after gimmick after gimmick, to where there was nothing to follow it with. Then the territory started going down a little bit. I think Bill was a little bit burnt out. He turned the reigns more or less over to Ken Mantel and Jim Ross. Bill always took good care of me and everything. But it was kind of like with Jim Ross and Bill, "Oklahoma, Oklahoma, Oklahoma. Football, football." I used to want to tell Ross, "How many times are you going to tell these people at home that Doc's a former Oklahoma football player and wrestler? They don't care anymore. Get off of it. It's almost like you're giving them more credibility than the business." Doc got the push, and here I am grooming him. Which was fine. That was good. I was happy for him. He got a good run.

But it was just a thing with me where I felt like, "Well, okay, I've sat on the back burner now and been the good, loyal, and faithful servant, and doing what I need to do for the business. It's time for me to get off the back burner and be back out there where I should be, where I deserved to be. I was already into my Japan deal with Stan Hansen, the first time around. I more or less told Ken while I was getting ready to go to Japan, "You need to take better care of me and put me back in the limelight, instead of where you've got me. Or I'll just do Japan." Doc and I are great friends. I wasn't jealous of Doc or anything. It was just business. They assured me that things were, you know, "Yeah, you're right, Ted. We'll work something out here." I even said, "Gosh, I'll go back. Turn me on Doc." So I get to Japan. At that time me and Bruce Prichard through the Houston wrestling had developed somewhat of a friendship. Bruce had told me right before I left for Japan that he's going up for an interview with McMahon. I said, "I've been up there. I worked for his dad." I think Pat was helping Vince. One of my first programs up there was with Pat Patterson. So I said, "Just drop my name and see if they bite." Halfway through the tour I called Bruce or somebody let me know that Crockett had bought Watts' territory. I didn't know, and here I was in Japan. I'm going, "Golly, now what happens?" Then when I did talk to Bruce, he told me they wanted me to come to a TV in Dallas for Crockett. I said, "I'll come, and have me advertised in a dark match, not TV. I'll do the dark match, but I'm not going to be on TV until I know what I'm doing." Bruce at the same time had told me, "Vince McMahon is very interested. Don't commit to Crockett until you have an opportunity to talk to Vince." So I get home and I called Vince. He wasn't available at the time. The secretary said he'll get back to me. I waited for like three or four days and hadn't heard from him. So I was thinking, "Golly, maybe he's not that interested." So I went and did the dark matches. I came to a verbal agreement with Crockett on a deal. But I hadn't signed anything. I went home, and was home a day, and the phone rang. My wife said it's Vince McMahon. And again, the rest is history. I got on a plane and went to New York. I talked to him, and he basically the first time around said, "I've got an idea. Something that I think that you can do, that's never been done. But I can't tell you what it is unless you decide to come on board." Which makes sense. You don't want to give away a good idea. I got on the phone to my mentor, Terry Funk, and said, "Terry, this is what he said." Terry said, "Ted, if Vince at this point in time has something that is his idea and says it's for you, he's going to push the hell out of it. Pack your bags and don't look back." That's what I did. It turned out to be the greatest thing I ever did.

Clark: What expectations did you have going into the WWF, and did it turn out to be what you had expected?

DiBiase: It turned out to be more than I expected. Once Vince laid it out to me and told me what we were doing and where we were headed, of course, I didn't know that it would put me in the top slot that I eventually had. I didn't realize that I was going to come in and become the number one heel. I was probably, gosh, for a long time. I don't know how long it was, I just know I was for a long time. Some people say, "Gosh, you were on top longer than anybody there, as far as a heel." The tag deal with Andre and all that lasted a long time. I was involved in something for the whole time that I was there. Yeah, it was bigger than I ever imagined it could have been. I mean it was bigger than the business itself. In my position there I would never have thought that the business would go the heights that it went to. And the notoriety and the spin-offs that have resulted from that. The dolls and the action figures, Nintendo video games. You walk into a video arcade, and there you are! I never fathomed any of that. I'm grateful. Sure, we all as wrestlers can say, "I didn't get paid enough. I didn't get paid enough." I don't ever say be satisfied. Certainly, me like a lot of the guys, I look at the big numbers and hear about the big numbers, and say, "Gosh, look at these football players and baseball players and these guys making these big numbers." I've made a great living, but by comparison, multi-million dollar contracts and stuff. I think, "Well, I should have been taken a little bit better care of." Perhaps I should have. Perhaps we all should have. But still the bottom line is, had not Vince McMahon made the move that he made, the opportunity that I was given would have never existed. I wouldn't have gotten what I did get out it. So for that I have to be grateful. Maybe that's the "I just know how I was raised." But I am grateful.

Clark: How did your life change when you went from a regional area to working full-time for a big time national promotion?

DiBiase: Family-wise, I guess I was gone more. I mean I was used to traveling. Instead of getting in the car and driving two or three hundred miles, I was getting on a plane and flying two or three thousand miles. Not that much. In terms of being gone, I was gone more but when I was off I was home more. Packing your bag and going to a town is still packing your bag and going to a town. As far as going to the national level and the national exposure, it is without a doubt the notoriety that I got. Over those first couple of years and since then it's gotten to be where I can't go anywhere without being recognized. It changed the privacy factor enormously. I mean, when you were young, you'd always think, "One of these days I'll be one of the guys that they're asking for autographs from." That was a big deal. Now, I wish I had been a hooded wrestler! I could walk down the street and nobody would know who I was. I mean, don't get me wrong. To say that I don't like it, would be a lie. Sure, you like it when people recognize and say that they've enjoyed watching you and they've gotten a lot of pleasure from it. It's always good to hear those compliments. It makes you realize that what you're doing was worthwhile. You enjoy that recognition, of course. But that was my job.

Just like with my kids, I get that compliment a lot, like, "For you having done what you've done, you're kids sure seem to be down to earth." I said that's because we don't make any big deal out of it here at home. It's just my job. It's what I do for a living. That's all I want my kids to ever look at it as. The irony is that, here I am all these years later with three sons, and I'm telling them the same thing my father said, "Do anything you want, but don't even think about being a wrestler." The lifestyle is not conducive to successful family life. I have been very fortunate. I was married very young and divorced once. My oldest son is by my first marriage. He lives with us now. I'm married a second time now to a wonderful woman. We have had our problems. You can't be married in a business like this where you're gone most of the time without having problems. Fortunately, we've been able to work everything out and just work through the problems, whatever they are. Gosh, it's hard to keep a relationship alive when you almost live two different existences. I'm home a lot now. I'm home probably more than I have been in a long time, with this injury and everything. But I've been home for a while now, and it's kind of really settling in to being Dad and being around my kids more. It's great.

Clark: What attitude or philosophy did you have when you went to work for the World Wrestling Federation?

DiBiase: What I said I was going to do mentally was, "I realize the character that I was given was something that I really had to project. And that that was very important." I said, "I'm going to do everything I can to make the 'Million Dollar Man' the most despicable, low-life, money mongering terd that I could. That character, just real arrogant, but as animated as they want me to be with it." It was real. That's why it fit me so well. I couldn't have done anything else. In other words, I couldn't have gone out and been, poor Terry, a Red Rooster. I couldn't have done it. I would have felt like he did. Or a Doink. But this character I could be very real, very tangible. Then when the suit came off, I was a wrestler. I was just a hard nosed wrestling heel. That was the philosophy. And it worked.

Clark: Why do you think the "Million Dollar Man" character was so successful in getting over upon your arrival?

DiBiase: Number one, it had never been done before. It's just one of those things that will always work, because everybody, everybody can identify with that. Everybody can identify with money. At some time or another everybody has had a money problem. It's almost the truth. Like the "Million Dollar Man" says, "Everybody's got a price. I can buy you." We've all had times where we go, "Golly, if somebody offered me a million dollars, would I do this?"

Clark: That's going along the lines of the movie *Indecent Proposal*, and that was extremely successful.

DiBiase: Exactly, because you're always wondering, what would you do for money? That's why it was so real. Everybody, everybody could understand it. Because everybody wants to believe in their own mind or their own heart. They're either going to like the guy because they'll say, "Sure, I would do anything for money," or they're going to hate this guy, which most people would, for calling them on it. Saying, "Yeah, you say you can't be bought. We'll let me just up the ante here a little bit. Just think about it, you could retire if you had this kind of money. And all you've got to do is just this one thing for me." It's like the devil standing on your shoulder going, "Just do it. Just do it." Everybody can identify with it. That's why I think it was so successful. I think it would be if I went back.

Clark: Did you expect what was coming for you? Such as appearances on Arsenio Hall's show and *Lifestyles of the Rich and Famous*, as well as major pay-per-views and television shows.

DiBiase: No, I never fathomed that. I really didn't. Believe me, there were times when I had to pinch myself, "Gosh, is this really happening to me?" I was doing Japan and doing Mid South. Then, I can still remember riding through Manhattan in the back of a limousine with my wife, going, "Is this really happening to us?" I couldn't believe it. It was really a dream come true there for a while. Man, I worked for it. I worked a lot of years before I reached up and grabbed the brass ring.

Clark: What affect do you think all that exposure has had on the wrestling business in general?

DiBiase: Overall, I think it was good. One of the biggest compliments I ever got was from Wilford Brimley, the actor. I rode with him on a plane one day. He said, "You know, what you guys do is one of the few things left on television that's basic good versus evil, and ultimately good's going to win. Good role models." In other words, you're not giving the kids a movie where the bad guy gets away with it, and everybody's going, "Yeah, yeah, he did it." Or glorifying bad guys.

Wrestling, bottom line, is good versus evil. The "Million Dollar Man" might laugh in your face for a while, but ultimately he's going to get his butt kicked. I agreed with him.

Bottom line, I just think there were times when they took it too far. Papa Shango, nice guy, great guy, but the gimmick itself, getting into that voodooism and stuff like that, I just didn't agree with that. The guy personally, I like. He's a good friend of mine. It was an opportunity he had to make money, God bless him. But it was just one of those characters that I thought was just too far out there.

Clark: What do you think was your method to success for the longevity of the run you had with the WWF and the experience there?

DiBiase: Trying to stay as believable as possible. In any situation, being smart enough to know how to get the job done that was asked of me and maintain my heat. In other words, you can get beat. But it's the way you get beat. You know, you can get beat or you can get slaughtered. It's like the thing I did with the 1-2-3 Kid. I mean, how can I do this? And not look like a total fool. I thought I did a pretty good job. They remember it happened. But it was like a big joke. It was something they wanted to taunt me with. But nobody in their mind thought that kid could ever possibly beat me. That's it, in a nutshell, being able to do things like that throughout the time that I was there. Just being smart enough to maintain my credibility at all times.

Clark: Just as Jim Duggan and One Man Gang's styles changed when they went to Titan, did you find that happening to you in any way?

DiBiase: Not really. Again, back to the philosophy. The change was in projecting the character. Project the character. I had never done all the skits that I did to make the "Million Dollar Man" have the personality that he did. But it was doing that and then carrying that over and being able to be that wrestler. If anything, I think maybe there wasn't as much opportunity for me to get really down on the mat and wrestle the old style match. As far as grab a hold and get it, and exchange holds, and in and out of a hold. You didn't have time. We're never given time to have the technical match that I really love to have. That would be the only change. As far as trying to do things in my matches that were believable or exciting and solid, I think I always was.

Clark: How did Virgil help or affect your character and the gimmick?

DiBiase: He definitely helped. By the way, he's a great guy. Great guy. The whole idea was, here's this guy that's built and has got this look like he would as soon chew you up and spit you out as look at you. He was just that added piece. People are saying, "You wouldn't be talking crap, number one, if you didn't have all the money. Number two, you wouldn't be talking crap if you didn't have this great big guy standing next to you to keep you from somebody knocking the dog out of you." It was kind of like, people we're going, "If you didn't have that monster standing next to yo, you wouldn't be talking so big." That was the deal. And it worked. Plus the fact that here's a guy working for me, and I would even abuse him.

Clark: Which situation do you think proved to be the most successful and effective for your character, having Virgil as your second or Sensational Sherri?

DiBiase: Without a doubt, the first couple of years and Virgil were the most successful. I think that was just the ideal situation. Because like I said before, that combination, just the picture that it painted in itself. Here's this guy who is obviously filthy rich and just arrogant about the fact, and just shoving his money in everybody's face. Talking big, but yet he's letting his money talk and he's letting this other guy who he's bought, to be his muscle. That without a doubt I think was the most heat. I think that the run with Sherri was just something to change the picture. It was time for a change. It's like anything, you've seen it, you've seen it, you've seen it. It's just like, I got a call from NBC wanting to know if the reason I was leaving the WWF was because of the ongoing investigation into Vince McMahon. I said, "Look, fellows. I've been there, I've been there, I've been there. It's time for me to have a break anyway."

Clark: How did you feel when the WWF was straying farther and farther away from the basics of wrestling and more towards the entertainment part of it?

DiBiase: I had mixed feelings. I've always thought you've got to go back to the basics. In other words, you've always got to keep them in mind. Let me try to be objective here and say, I've never been on the promotion end of it. It has to constantly change and it has to constantly evolve to keep it interesting. That's just any business. So in their effort to do that, maybe they felt like they had to go to some lengths to do that. But I still think you've got to keep the issues. The whole thing is personal issues. That's the thing that draws. When an issue's created, like me saying I was going to buy the world title and all that business, the more personal the issue, the more the heat, and a lot of people are going to want to see it.

Clark: You joined the WWF at a time some people describe as the height of its success and you have been there to see the pay-per-view buy rates and house show attendances decline. In your opinion, how do you think did all this happen?

DiBiase: Again, it goes back to the overall evolvement of the business. If you see the same thing over and over and over, well, pretty soon it's like, "Well, I've seen that. I've seen that. I've seen that." It got to where it was a challenge of finding new, good talent. That's one thing. It's kind of like, I could watch the Atlanta tape back then. They had some great talent there. They've got some great talent there now. They had great talent there. But you've seen it, you've seen it, you've seen it. My very good friend Ric Flair and even Hogan, as big as he was. Hulk was smart. It was time for him to make a move. Irregardless of how many different ways you see it, you can only see it so many times before you get tired of it. Now if it leaves for a while and then comes back, you're ready to see it again. I kind of feel like that's what's happened. The business has got to evolve and you've got to turn over and you've got to have new faces, new characters, new people. It's hard to find quality.

Clark: How would you describe what happened with Hulk Hogan, in that you worked with him back in 1979 when he starting out, you worked with him at the height of his popularity with the WWF in the mid to late 80s, you worked with him when his drawing power started dwindling in the early 90s, and you worked with him when he came back to Titan this year for possibly his last run with the WWF that did not draw well at all?

DiBiase: The phenomena of Hulk Hogan. I don't think there's any one thing that you can put your finger on that would say why it happened or why for all of the years that there's been wrestling, why was it that this guy became the biggest superstar? He surpassed, as far as popularity and somebody being known on sight, not only any wrestler that's ever wrestled, but innumerous sports figures and Hollywood stars. You could almost ask anybody, whether they give two hoots and a holler about wrestling, "Have you ever heard of Hulk Hogan?" They're going to say yeah. Everybody knows who he is. Why? The old-timers always told me, "Kid, part of it is being at the right place at the right time." And without a doubt Terry Bollea came along and was the guy that was at the right place at the right time. There's a lot of people in our business and there's a lot of fans who say, and I've heard people say it time and time again, "Hulk Hogan is not a great wrestler. He's not a great worker." Or if you want to say, "Hulk Hogan's not a great worker." Wrong. I'm a nineteen year veteran who most people put a lo of value in my judgment. I'll tell you, and I've had this conversation with people, the guy is very talented. Very talented. He's got the one thing and he's got a whole lot of the one thing, that if you didn't have anything else, you've got to have to make it in our business. And that's a lot of charisma.

To give you an example. You take Dusty Rhodes for example. Now here's a big, heavy-set guy, ugly--if Dusty reads this interview, don't take it personal Dust--but what I'm getting to is putting him over. Here's a guy with a lot of natural charisma. You put Dusty Rhodes on TV with a microphone and he will charm you. He did it for years. He's an example of a guy that never had a body and wasn't a great wrestler. But he knew how and when to do something, and he could do it on the microphone. It worked for years. Hulk Hogan, take that a step further. Here's a guy that has a ton of charisma *and* the body. He had it all. Is he the technical wrestler say that I've been or that a Bret Hart is? No. But he's got charisma. Bret Hart, there's a guy that I respect as one of the really great technical guys in our business today too. If I was going to pick out something where Bret was lacking, it would be a little charisma. When Bret interviews, he makes a point, but it's kind of monotone. I don't want that to be misleading, either. I think a lot of his talent in and out of the ring.

But we're talking Hulk Hogan right now. Hulk knew how to reach everybody. You say, "Gosh, what was it about this guy? The guy's going bald. He looks like an old man." He's not any older than I am. I'm not exactly a youngster, either. But I'm not an old man. The guy's loosing his hair, but he had a great body and he reached the kids. "Say your prayers, eat your vitamins, and train," that deal. But it's the way he delivered it and the way he came across on the mike and the way he came across in the ring. He has natural charisma. I think that's part of the phenomena of Hulk Hogan. And he was the guy that was there when the Vince McMahon came along and had the brilliant idea to market wrestling the way he did it.

I've told people, I feel very fortunate that Ted DiBiase came along at that time. My heyday, my prime time years, were the prime time years of professional wrestling. There's a lot guys that have come before; people in my father's era and people just after my father's era. The Dory Funk's and the Terry Funk's who have always done very well, who were right at the end of their prime time when this thing hit real big. Then you take full advantage of it. I was there. I'm grateful. But what was that? That had nothing to do with my talent. What it had to do with was, the right place at the right time. So I ended up being with Titan. Wrestlemania III, the world indoor attendance record at the Silverdome, was kind of like what really set it off. From that point until about a year or so ago, or two years ago, it was just everywhere we went, sellout or near sellout business. And dolls, video games, Arsenio Hall, *Lifestyles of the Rich and famous*. There's wrestlers doing things that I would have never thought in a million years I'd be doing.

The decline was like anything else, as far as I'm concerned. It's not through any fault of Hulk's or anybody else. We entertain people. Look in other sports or other forms of entertainment. The Beetles in rock and roll. Anytime something comes along that's that big, it's great. But nothing lasts forever. Nothing. I think Hulk was smart. Hulk took a hiatus. Everything was built on Hulk Hogan in the WWF. There were other guys that came and went and came and went. But Hulk was always there, from day one all the way through up until just a little while ago, and then he came back again. When he came back this last time, you can't put any of the blame on him. I mean, the business had been hurt for a number of reasons.

When Vince decided to make this move, it was great. It was a new look. It made wrestling new. It was different, and it worked. He geared it towards young kids. Rock and wrestling, that thing. He dressed it up. Let's be honest, the old stereotypical image of wrestling was your smoke filled arena and your blue collar crowd. If you were what you would call a yuppie today or your businessman, your suit and tie guy that went and worked and had a suburbia type family, you didn't think about taking your family to the wrestling matches. That wasn't the type of crowd. It was a rougher crowd. Then McMahon stepped that up. He dressed it up and presented in a way with his marketing power to where it was family entertainment. All of that is part of that package. All of that is part of the Hulk Hogan phenomena. I give full credit to Hulk. For having been given the opportunity, he took the ball, boy, and he ran with it. He's a smart guy. He's a very smart guy. But he'll tell you, "I was the right guy at the right time."

Clark: How did your level of enthusiasm and motivation change during those six years in the WWF, and how did it effect your performance?

DiBiase: Naturally, when I made the initial change, I got very motivated. I was very motivated that I was making more money than I've ever seen. That's like as the "Million Dollar Man" would say, "Everybody's got a price." It was motivating. Plus it was exciting. It was a change. I was being this character and developing this character, which I had never really developed. Ted DiBiase was never anything but Ted DiBiase the wrestler, until he was the "Million Dollar Man." That was new. That was exciting. That was a challenge to me.

When you see things peak, it's kind of like, the circus comes to town and you're the only show in town so everybody comes and sees you. And they come and see you and they come and see you. If they've come to see you two or three times and you don't change the acts, you don't change the show, you don't get new faces, and change it up to make it something different, well, it's kind of like you see a movie that you think is great, and you go, "Wow, let's go see that again." You go and you see it again. You might even see it a third and fourth time. But then after that, it's like, "Hey man, I've seen it." It's not that exciting anymore. Same thing with this business. It's got to change. The faces have got to change. You have to keep shocking the people. Well, we've kind of quit doing that where it's just grown to a point where it just doesn't happen anymore. It's a combination of things. You can't point the blame at any one thing. The availability of existing good talent to help teach young talent is not what it used to be. The availability of places to go for young guys breaking in to have time to groom and actually wrestle for fifteen or twenty minutes every night in a ring in an arena in front of crowd. Or interview on a local television station week after week after week to develop that skill. One of the great compliments that I've always gotten. I go do a local TV. They say, "Will you do a thirty second bite for us." I go, "Yeah, just give me a second here. What are your call letters." And I'll go, "Three, two, one." I hit a thirty second commercial for them. They go, "Golly, that easy?" I said, "Guys, I do this everyday." It's like people say, "How much thought do you put into an interview?" At some times depending on how important the interview for what the show is, you get a basic idea. But it's not scripted. Sometimes I don't have a clue as to what I'm going to say until that camera light comes one. But it's just something that you develop. You stepped into that mold, and it's like your character and you know what you're doing, and you just go with it. That's hard to explain to some people. Especially people who do totally scripted work.

Clark: How would you describe your six years being employed by probably the most powerful man in wrestling, Vince McMahon?

DiBiase: I have no complaints, or I would say very few. There's not a promoter that's ever existed I think in any business and there's not a CEO of a major corporation who's not made any enemies. The reason you're the boss is because you're the one that's got the guts and the ingenuity to make it happen. Nobody could ever take that away from Vince McMahon. To step out the way he did and step on every independent wrestling promoter's toes in the country and virtually steal, if you want to say, they're best talent, and form the company that he did, and have the guts to go nationwide with something. There was a point there when he started this thing where he just about lost it all. Then it took off. So you've got to give credit where credit's due. And I give him a lot of credit and a lot of intestinal fortitude to do that. You can't say that the guy doesn't have guts. Not at all. If you're running a company and you're the boss, isn't your job to get the most productivity out of your people and try to do it as economically as possible. That's business.

Again, I can say, "Was I treated totally fair? Do I feel like I got paid properly on every payoff?" No. I don't know anybody that's ever satisfied with the money they make. I don't think you should be ever totally satisfied with what you make. I think there were times when I could have made more money. When you're one of the guys, you have to look at things as how it effects me. Because that's your livelihood. It's not up to you to look at it and go, "What's the big picture here?" But

I've never been on the promotional side. I haven't had to pay the bills the way Vince has had to pay. That's a big company with a lot of personnel and a lot of people to pay. A lot of people to pay. I'm like any other guy that's ever been in this business, there's times when I could say, "Yeah, maybe he should have paid me more." But the bottom line is this. Vince McMahon gave Ted DiBiase the opportunity to be the "Million Dollar Man." Vince McMahon created that character. He gave it to me. He said, "I think you can do this. I'm going to give you the ball and let you run with it." And I ran with it. I ran with it, and did it very well. I did very well. I made more money working for Vince McMahon than I could have ever made working for any other promoter in the business. You go back the generation before me and before that. The guys that were locked in positions in the WWF in the prime time years made more money than wrestlers ever made, ever.

So by being one of those guys, how can I complain. Being the "Million Dollar Man" and the opportunity that Vince McMahon gave me, gave me more notoriety than I could have ever dreamed of having. I've got a couple of friends that are athletes of other professional sports. I've got a couple of friends that are baseball players. I've got a couple of friends that are football players. At different times I run into them. I'm out in a restaurant eating with them or I'm in a hotel sitting in a bar having a drink with them. I'm recognized along with them. It's the visibility that this business gives you. I did a fundraiser not too terribly long ago in Trenton, NJ for the Sunshine Foundation, where they raise money for terminally ill kids and give kids their wishes. There was a little boy there in a wheelchair. His only wish was to meet the "Million Dolllar Man." I told them I'd be there. The feature guy that was there and *Entertainment Tonight* was coming to interview was Jermaine Jackson. He was received well. I met him, nice guy. All the attention before the night was over, switched to me. People were coming up constantly getting autographs. These people were in awe, and going, "Gosh, I didn't realize that these guys are that popular." They've invited me back to this thing again this year. The front cover of their program is going to be me and this little kid. I'm not patting myself on the back and saying how popular I was or that I was more popular than Jermaine Jackson. Nothing like that. And it has nothing to do with Jermaine Jackson or Ted DiBiase. It's the visibility of being a wrestler. That's something that I've got to say thank you to Vince McMahon for. He gave me that. The spin-offs now. I'm negotiating and trying to start doing some voice-over work. Who knows what's going to happen. Possibly break in and do some acting and some movies. There's some people that think that I can do that. I'm also possibly going to do some guest appearances or speaking engagements, like going to some high schools and stuff and talking to kids. Which I feel is something I could really enjoy doing. I want to do something very positive with the "celebrity status" that this has given me.

I didn't leave the WWF totally bitter. We all have our times when we go, "What's he doing? We should be treated better." I'm human. I've had my times when I've gone, "What's going on?" I've been away from the WWF since August. I've been off and not working for about a month. I've had time to sit back and reflect on some things and think about the last six or seven years. What do I have to bitch about? I don't have a bitch. There's guys that have gone before and all they can do once their time has past is knock the promotion and knock the promoter. Sometimes you've got a legitimate beef. "He's killing this and he's killing that." Where would it have been had he hadn't done it the way he was doing it? Who's decided that it would be in any better shape than it's in now? I think one of the problems is overexposure. But I just think some guys are getting those sour grapes. There are some guys who I think knock Vince and some of the things that he did simply because it happened after their time. It's like guys that were big stars, and all of a sudden here comes Hulk Hogan. He surpassed any star that there ever was and made more money. There's older guys that look at that and they're bitter about it. Bitter about it because it didn't happen to them. There's guys in the business right now that don't have near the working ability that I have. I don't think I'm the greatest worker in the business. But I can work. But there are guys out there that don't have half of that ability that have made three times the money. I'm not bitter. They got a shot at it, they got an opportunity. God bless them, "Good for you." It's just that kind of business. There are no certainties. Life is not fair to anybody. It's not just in wrestling. I mean, how many people that read this interview and read what I'm saying right now can relate the same thing to their own business? And say, "Here I am. I've put all this time in with the company. Just because that guy got a college degree, a piece of paper that said he went to college, he's making more money than I do, and he doesn't know half as much about what's going on as I do." How many times have you heard that story? Happens all the time.

So what I've tried to do is be appreciative of what I have done and what I have been given, and try to make the most of it. One other very important thing that I was always taught or told several times when I was breaking in, and boy, I really feel like it rings true. "You treat people going up the ladder the way that you want to be treated when you're on your way down that ladder. Because somewhere down that road you're going to cross that path again. It never fails." That's true, and I never forgot that. I don't think that I have any major enemies in this business. I think that I've basically gotten along with everybody. You just go with the flow. But that rings real true. It's kind of like the Golden Rule. You treat people the way you want to be treated. So I've got no complaints. There's a lot of guys that go through this business and they come to the end of it, and they end up really bitter or with the attitude that this business owes them something. This business owes you nothing.

Clark: Do you think that might be because they were living a fantasy, and then all of a sudden it was all gone?

DiBiase: Oh, yeah. I do. It's like, they don't think that it's ever going to be over. It's just like guys that live one day to the next, and they don't take time to consider or they don't realize that nothing lasts forever. Nothing lasts forever. Then when it comes to an end and they're not ready for it, then they look to blame anybody else but them. That's kind of like, "All the years I've put into this company and all the years that I've been faithful." It's like, "Well, you got paid. You got paid for every day you worked. They kept you on as long as they could keep you on." Eventually, everything has to change. It's kind of like, you do a day's work, you get paid. You're loyal, that's great. It's not the type of business where some people work for companies, where the longer you're with the company, the more valuable you become.

Sports, it's just the opposite because of age. The longer you're with the company, the older you're getting. In athletics the older you get, eventually there becomes a point where you've got to retire or be put out to pasture, because that's just the way it is. Some guys are like, "Golly, after all I've done..." Well, you know going in what you're getting into. So you better prepare yourself for it.

Clark: Did you prepare yourself for that situation and/or were you able to be realistic about the job you had?

DiBiase: Yeah. You never know for sure when you're going to retire, when you're going to quit. I'm ready. With this injury that I have, I was wise enough to spend a significant amount of money to take out a disability policy to cover me well. I've got that. I've saved money. I've put a lot of money into my retirement. Yeah, I'm ready. I've got other avenues to go.

Clark: What is your reaction to the situation Vince McMahon and his company Titan Sports and the WWF is currently involved in and how it effects the business?

DiBiase: I think it's sad. Personally, of course, there's no way that I could know everything that goes on. You hear a lot of things, a lot of hearsay. But the main thing the government's trying to say is that h was buying and distributing steroids to wrestlers. I personally don't buy it. We'd have heard a lot about that. There have been several wrestlers that have done steroids and whatever. But the way I looked at it was like, everybody was doing their own thing. Now if he bought steroids and shared them somebody or something like that, then that's one thing.

But that's not distributing. That's not Vince McMahon spending a bunch of the company money to haul in all this quantity of steroids and make sure that all of his wrestlers are taking it. Nothing like that ever happened. If that's what the government wants to say happened, then they're barking up the wrong tree. I just have refused to believe that. I kind of think it's a personal vendetta. I don't know by who. But I just think a man that's been in his position, without a doubt he stepped on some toes. You don't get that powerful in a business without making some people mad. Maybe he stepped on somebody's toes, and it was like, "We'll get you." I can only talk from a personal standpoint. I had the best years of my career with that company working for that man. Everything that he said he would do for me, he pretty much did. One person's rose is another person's thorn. It's sad to me because I think a lot of the bad press has hurt his business. It's obvious that it's hurt his business. Will it recover? I hope so. I know it will get better than what it is now. Will it ever be what it was? That I couldn't say. I would say that if it does, it's going to be a while. It's going to be a long time.

Clark: With Vince McMahon scheduled to go on trial in May 1994 and with Hulk Hogan officially being one of the Justice Department's main witnesses, in your opinion what kind of an effect will those two people who most profited from wrestling in the 80s now against each other have on the business and the WWF?

DiBiase: I really can't say. It's hard for me to comment on that because I don't know any of the details. It's sad. Maybe they'll go to trial and it'll all come out in the wash, and we'll all know. But I don't know. These two men worked together for a long time. Those two in particular, one guy being the boss and running it and giving the other guy the ball to run with it, you'd think that they were pretty close at one time. And to be at opposite ends now, I don't know. I'm not going to point a finger at anybody and say, "This guy's right and this guy's wrong." Because I don't know.

I think a lot of Hulk. For a guy that's been in the position he's been in the business, at the very top, he's never quit being one of the guys. He's never stuck his nose up in the air or he's never separated himself from the guys. Never. Very easily could have because he stepped to a whole level. But he's always been one of the guys. I respect him for that. I don't want to say anything where I don't know anything.

I hate to see it happen. I hate to see what I thought was such a great thing in the business and how good it was, to see it come down to this court deal and all this name calling going back and forth, and them having to go to trial against each other. I don't think either one of them are particularly happy about it. I mean, who knows? Maybe Vince McMahon really did Hulk wrong. Or maybe Hulk did the other way. I don't know. It's not for me to say. It's for the courts.

Clark: But for you being in the business and working with Vince McMahon and Hulk Hogan, is the magnitude of this situation as big as everybody is saying it is?

DiBiase: Oh, sure. I would think so. I will say that. Yeah, it's a pretty big deal.

Clark: What kind of changes if any did you find in Japan when you recently returned there for a full tour and was it a big adjustment going there after six years in the WWF?

DiBiase: It was an adjustment in that the intensity there is always more. The intensity is intense in the WWF. I don't want to say the work is harder, it's just maybe it's a half a step faster and half a step more physical. More suplexes and a lot more on the mat wrestling, and in and out of holds. Too much. The work ethic I still respect. The young guys breaking in, they have a position down the ladder and they know that position, and they are made to work over a period of time. They gradually step up that ladder. That's just the way it is. Irregardless of how good they may be. They are made to work so that by the time they are given that opportunity to step into the spotlight, they appreciate it. That's gone here. That doesn't exist here anymore. That's one of the problems here. That's got to come from the front office. It's that greed thing. Like, "Look what we can do with this guy."

Like I don't fault the Ultimate Warrior. I don't fault him. He had a break. He had an opportunity to make a lot of money. He had a look that was marketable. But he was never made to pay the dues. I mean the serious dues. He had a lot of guys around that were put in there to help him along. I just think it was too much too soon. I'm not saying that he didn't pay any dues. This guy spent a lot of nights having blowouts too. And I don't fault him for it. I know Jim. He got a break. Whether I believe that he was deserving of it when he got it, is neither here nor there. Some guys are like, "Well, that no good so and so, why did he get it?" I might ask myself, "Why did he get it?" But I don't fault him for it. It's like, "Hey brother, you got the break. Good for you." I don't fault anybody in this business for getting an opportunity and making money. Timing is everything. Being in the right place at the right time, and them wanting a certain something that fits at the time. You happen to come along, and you're in.

Clark: What were your main reasons for not accepting WCW's offer, and what are your opinions on their organization?

DiBiase: I don't think that door is totally closed. For what they wanted initially, I thought was a good idea. But with me number one not knowing whether I'm going to wrestle or not again with this injury, I'm not real sure where the wrestling career is going. Whether the next step is totally commentary or a manager type role, I don't know. They initially wanted me to come for one appearance and see how it went. That's fine. But by making that one appearance I would almost certainly sever my ties with the WWF. Because that's the last thing Vince wants any of his talent to do, is go there. It's kind of like, "I've put all this time and money and invested this into you. Now you're going to take it there?" Of course, at the same time he might say, "You've got a great opportunity. Go for it." Having had the position in the WWF that I had, and going to the WCW, that's a major move. Over the last three or four years rumors flew around that I was going there. I never did go. It's a major move. For making a move like that, I basically felt like it was worth more than what they were offering me. I understand too, from what I've been told they're kind of on a tight budget now. I just think I'm worth a little more than that. I'm not asking for the farm. Maybe another time. It wasn't like I was being overly greedy or anything. Maybe something will come up later that's better. But I didn't close the door.

Clark: And neither have you closed the door with the WWF, right?

DiBiase: No, no.

Clark: How do you think your health in any way has been majorly effected from being in wrestling for as long as you have? And has it been difficult to stay in the good shape that you have after being on the road constantly for the past six years?

DiBiase: The health has been affected and it is starting to show now in the last year or two especially. I'm not in the shape that I was in two years ago. I'm not in terrible shape, but I'm not in the shape I used to be. As I'm speaking, number one, I've got the herniated disc in my neck. Potentially, it's a career ending injury. If I have this surgery done, they replace this disc with a piece of bone and they fuse it. If I go back and get in the ring and try to protect that--you don't ever know when you're going to get hurt. You don't ever know when you're going to get dropped on your head. If I take the wrong bump, after that fusion's been done, then I'm in a wheelchair for life. I understand there are a couple of wrestlers that have had that surgery and have gone back. Well, God bless them. It scares me. I've had one doctor say, point blank, "You've got no business going back in the ring once you've had this surgery." And another one saying, just basically, "I would recommend that you don't."

In addition to the disc problem, I have kind of like a chronic lower back problem. What's that from? Years of being slammed and backdropped and going over the top rope to the floor, just a beating. It's been innumerous chiropractic visits to put my back in, now to where I'm dealing with it right now kind of on a day to day daily basis, and trying to get it stabilized. And hopefully get to where it doesn't become a chronic problem.

Left shoulder, slight tear of the rotator cuff. I've known about this injury and I've dealt with it and wrestled with it since last February. I just haven't been as dedicated to get to doing the rehabilitation type exercises to alleviate all of the pain and get back to a regular workout regiment. That, I'm doing now. I'm trying to do that now. If it doesn't work, then the option is a shoulder surgery. But it's orthoscopically done, where they go in and they fix the tear in my rotator cuff.

I've had orthoscopic knee surgery on both knees. I've got a back problem. I've got a neck problem. I've got a shoulder problem. Yeah, almost nineteen years will do it to you.

Clark: Regarding the serious decision of whether to have the surgery replacing the disc in your neck, what kind of decision are you leaning towards?

DiBiase: I think I'm going to, let's put it that way. The options I have are, taking a year off, according to one doctor, and do all this physical therapy. In his words, it "will perhaps lengthen your career." Well, I've also been told that if I take the year off and get to feeling better, then maybe the disc goes back in and relieves the pressure on the nerve, and that I might feel better. But then if I was just to go on with a "normal life," that it might not bother me anymore or it might not bother me anymore for a long time. But I think I'm prolonging what would be the inevitable. Because if I take a year off and I go right back to wrestling, this physical therapist that I work with every day says, "You're chances are, within four or five months you're going to be right back where you are now." It looks like I should probably have the surgery. I've got a little time right now and I'm trying to figure what I'm going to do.

Clark: Would you say that you are happier or more relieved now that you're out of the WWF?

DiBiase: The fans that read your letter that are really die-hard fans, that really understand the lifestyle... I don't know if they really do understand the lifestyle.

Clark: They can watch and hear about you guys living it, but that's different than actually living it.

DiBiase: You would have to live it to understand it. Sometimes when I tell people the scheduling, they just don't believe it. They don't believe it's humanly possible to travel the way we travel. To leave home on a day and you fly to a city, and you wrestle. You go to bed, you get up at four or five o'clock the next morning. You fly out to another city and get in a car and drive a hundred miles. You wrestle, and you drive back a hundred miles. You sleep till four or five in the morning, get up and catch another plane. You do that ten days in succession sometimes. Then you go home for three days. But actually you're only going home for two and a half days because you've spent half of the first day off getting there. So all you actually have the time to do is go home and take a deep breath and do your laundry, and leave again. Almost seven years of that. 365 days in a year. 250 of them at least on the road.

Relief, yeah. It's kind of like I finally have time to take a deep breath, and say, "Okay, I can slow down this pace." Believe me, there were a few of the guys that have snapped. Like you go to the airport one morning and you're supposed to be getting on a plane going to another town, and you just go and you take your ticket, and you say, "I'm going home." I never did it, but I know guys that have done it. It's just, "I can't take it anymore. I'm leaving." It takes its toll. Like the "Million Dollar Man" would say, "Everything's got a price."

Clark: What are the important things in your life right now, and your priorities since you have gotten off the road?

DiBiase: Priorities are now family. I've had time to spend a lot more time with my family. It's almost like getting to know my family again. It's kind of like, "Who is this guy?" That's the number one priority. I'm really enjoying that, and my relationship with my family and my relationship with God. I'm a Christian. Like say, "Well, gosh, is he one of those fanatic born agains?" Put it this way, my relationship with God has been a constant struggle. Like up and down hill. I certainly have been no saint. I don't have to air my dirty laundry to anyone. I realize this now, having been off for a while, if I want to grow as a Christian, then I need to surround myself with Christian people. I need to make myself available to be in church with my family on Sundays and do those types of things. As opposed to being in the bar every night and that type of thing. It's kind of like, if you hang around something long enough, it's going to rub off. I don't want that to be taken the wrong way. I'm not knocking anybody. I'm just saying what I need. And some people are stronger than others. I feel like this has given me an opportunity to grow in my Christian life, and I want to take more time to do that. Basically what it is, Ted DiBiase, he's not a young wild man running the roads anymore. I'm approaching that forty mark, and I've got three sons. They say, if you're fortunate, you get older. You get wiser. I made a lot of mistakes. Made a lot of mistakes. Being a family person in this business is one of the hardest things in the world to do. And it really takes its toll. Me, like anyone of a number of my peers out there, can tell you, emotionally, it's a roller coaster. You know, up and down. A lot of people say, "Golly, you got it all. You're famous. You go some place and everybody knows you. You make great money." Those are nice things. But they do indeed, sounding like the "Million Dollar Man" again, they do indeed come with a price. Emotionally it's been tough for my family, tough for me. We try to overcome the hard spots and get better, and go on. It's hard for all of us. Irregardless of what field you're in.

Clark: What does the actual wrestling business mean to you today, and how does that compare to what it meant to you in your earlier years when you were starting out or climbing that ladder?

DiBiase: I love the business. I always will. I would like to see a lot of changes. I realize that the business has to constantly evolve. I'm just kind of at a loss as to where it's going now. It can never go back to what it was, I don't believe. Now I used to say, "It will go full circle." It has to constantly evolve. But I think there has to be some changes. More than anything I think it's been overexposed. It got so big to where there was twenty to thirty hours of wrestling on television a week. Too much. And very little of that thirty hours was quality.

Because I grew up in it and it has been the biggest part of my life, I'll always have a place for it and I'll always do for it what I can. But I feel like I'm reaching the point now where I'm ready to break away from it and take that breath of fresh air, and maybe do something else. But a lot of guys have tried before and they couldn't do it. So I'm making no commitment. They'll say, "Golly, we read this interview about Ted DiBiase two years ago, and now look at him. There he is getting back in the ring. I thought he said he was going to quit."

Clark: What would you, Ted DiBiase, most like to be remembered for in the professional wrestling business, by your peers, your employers, and the fans?

DiBiase: Somebody who always gave his all. I mean, it's impossible to always be up. But when people talk about me later, I would like to think that they'll say, "Every time we saw that guy, we got what we paid for. We got our money's worth." To me, if they always enjoyed hating me or loving me or whatever. And that I was a good businessman. That I wasn't hard to get along with. That I always tried to do what was best for business. That's what I'd like to be remembered for. From those guys, like as my kids grow up and probably meet some of these guys, that they would be able to say that, "Hey, you're dad was a great guy. He was fair. He never stepped on anybody's toes. He got along with people." That I wasn't arrogant and self-absorbed. That I treated everybody as an equal. And I feel like I have.

PLUGFEST '94

PROMOTIONS

*ACW run by Mark Bodey is releasing its two-hour Best of ACW tape for $25 with the much publicized 11/6/93 Terry Funk vs Sabu match, Jimmy Garvin vs Shane Douglas, and many more. Also a merchandise catalog is now available for a SASE featuring a special kind of t-shirt never done before with wrestling. Send all orders and inquiries to the American Entertainment Network at PO Box 146, Bowers, PA 19511.

*D.A.C. of 1020 Cooper Street, Deptford, NJ 08096 has tapes from his Minneaoplis shows: Grand Slam I on 4/17 has fantastic matches such as Terry Funk vs Road Warrior Hawk, Sabu vs Lightning Kid, and Chris Candito vs Jerry Lynn. Grand Slam II on 7/10, featured Hawk vs Eddie Gilbert, Chris Candito vs Brian Christopher, Sabu vs Jerry Lynn. Each tape is $25. His latest show on 11/27 with Hawk vs Doink on top goes for $20. Also available are the Wayne, NJ show from November 1992 headlined by Funk vs Gilbert and Candito vs Sabu for $25, and the January 1992 Legends of Wrestling Philly Radison Hotel show with Funk vs Gilbert, Kerry Von Erich vs Sal Bellomo, Spider vs Sandman, and a match with Davey Boy Smith, also going for $25. Available after the event takes place on 2/19, a special tape of that card with Sabu vs Chris Benoit for only $25.

*Eastern Championship Wrestling run by Tod Gordon has a wide variety of merchandise available for the promotion. A monthly ECW newsletter published by Gabe Sapolsky titled ECW Action Wire talking about the group's storylines and interviewing its stars is available for $1.50 an issue. They are offering you a special of 4 issues for $5 right now. ECW hats are $10, shirts for kids are $12, shirts for adults are $15, key chains are $1, and they even have pens for ECW, which are a mere 50 cents each. Many tapes are now available. They have put together a video called "ECW's Bloodiest Matches" for $19.95. It features bloody, violent matches, most of which were not shown on television. Abdullah the Butcher meets Kevin Sullivan in two matches, one being in a steel cage. Also Eddie Gilbert & Dark Patriot vs Miguel Perez & Mr. Danger, Headhunters vs Perez & Danger, and Funk & Hansen vs Sullivan & Abby are featured. The 6/19/93 Summer Sizzler Spectacular with Terry Funk vs Eddie Gilbert in a texas death match for the King of Philadelphia and many other surprising incidents is $24.95. The 9/18/93 Ultra Clash with the Abdullah the Butcher & Kevin Sullivan vs Terry Funk & Stan Hansen bunkhouse match and the Headhunters vs Crash the Terminator & Miguel Perez basball bat match is also available for $24.95. All past episodes of ECW television are available at $20 for any two shows. Their 12/26 Holiday Hell supercard with Funk vs Sabu, a lights-out battle royal, and Public Enemy vs Bad Company where one of the jail-cages blow up after 15 minutes is available for $24.95. If ordering tapes, add $3 for shipping and handling on each tape. For more information call their hotline at 215-544-0421 or the ECW address is PO Box 224, Media, PA 19063.

*East Coast Wrestling Association is being sold in its entirety by its promoter, Jim Kettner. The purchase would include its ring which they bought from the WWF (was used for TVs in Allentown) years ago, sound system, all of the lighting equipment, and guardrails. ECWA tapes are also available, as is their $2 coloring book. All interested parties should contact Ketter at 108 Simca Lane #4, Wilmington, DE 19805 or 302-999-9662.

*Ladies International Wrestling Association mostly run by The Fabulous Moolah at PO Box 42081, Columbia, SC 29206 is offering two videos from their June 1993 convention in Las Vegas. One tape is available of the matches held that weekend, including Moolah vs Sunny Brook with special referee David Rogers, son of the late Buddy Rogers. The retired Mae Young worked against Barbie Jean. The other tape contains footage from the banquet they held where they presented awards and were joined by Big Bossman. Each video cassette is $42.

*Legends of Wrestling run by Mark Stern of PO Box 1720, Bensalem, PA 19020 is selling t-shirts from the first LOW convention in late January 1993 at $7 each, two for $12, or five for $25. Also available are the 8 X 10 color photos of all wrestlers from both conventions.

*Smoky Mountain Wrestling run by Jim Cornette at PO Box 1279, Morristown, TN 37816 offers a souvenir pamphlet listing merchandise available from their promotion for a SASE. The list includes tapes of their hot weekly television shows and major events, t-shirts, hats, etc. SMW, Tim Horner, Tracy Smothers, and Rock and Roll Express t-shirts all go for $12, while SMW hats are $8. SMW sweatshirts are $15. Fantastic new SMW jackets are going for $35. Their tape "SMW's Wildest Matches: The Lost Episodes" of interesting and rare footage is $15. They've just come out with SMW's Wildest Matches II, which is also $15. Tapes of special events such as Bluegrass Brawl, Fire on the Mountain I and II, and Thanksgiving Thunders I and II are each $17. Tapes of everyone of their TV shows is available from a list in their brochure. You can pick any two episodes on a tape for $15. Plus, they are offering the first 52 episodes of their television show for just $295. Orders less than $30 must include $2 for S&H.

*Universal Wrestling Alliance run by Dennis Galamb of PO Box 1497, Woodbridge, NJ 07095 has UWA t-shirts for $7, UWA staff shirts for $15, satin jackets for $35, very nice embroided hats for $8, and UWA program books for $2. The 8 X 10 photos of all wrestling superstars are available--color are $3 and B&W are $2.

WRESTLERS' ITEMS

*Tully Blanchard is offering his 28 minute testimony on his relationship with God and looking at his past in the wrestling business. You can obtain this audio tape by sending a donation of $6 or more to Tully Blanchard Ministries, PO Box 2724, Matthews, NC 28106.

*Bastion Booger (Mike Shaw) of PO Box 200, Skandia, MI 49885 is offering a big supply of Mexican magazines, t-shirts, dolls, photos, and other merchandise for sale. Send for info with a SASE.

*Destroyer Dick Beyer limited edition retirement t-shirts are now for sale payable to Beyer through Dr. Mike Lano at 68 Sable Point, Alameda, CA 94501 for $16.

*Danny Hodge of 914 Jackson, Perry, OK 73077 has autograped copies of his book, "Permanently Cooking with Danny Hodge," featuring tips on dieting and mainly recipes, available for $33.

*Honky Tonk Man of 8336 Westfair Circle South, Germantown, MD 38319 has personalized autographed 8 X 10 color photos available for $6. HTM is also offering his old guitars, ring suits, and trunks for the best offer to come his way. Write HTM Enterprises for more details or your bid on his outfits that he wore in the ring.

*The Master, a manger with a neat gimmick who is currently working on New Jersey independents, has 8 X 10 autographed color photos available for sale as well as other things through Rocco Mazza, PO Box 9213, Lyndhurst, NJ 07071.

*Mongolian Mauler of PO Box 337, Murfreesboro, TN 37133 has a ton of all kinds of merchandise available on him. Send SASE for pamphlet.

*Road Warriors Hawk and Animal, who not only are partners with Zubaz pants, have plenty of merchandise available through their catalog. They also have individual fan clubs at $5 each or a the Road Warriors fan club which costs $7.50 to join. With the fan club you receive an autograph picture, membership certificate, and a catalog. For more info or to get a catalog call 800-414-HAWK or write to PO Box 24198, Edina, MN 55424.

*Nikolai Volkoff has personally autographed 8 X 10 photos available for $5 at 5424 Glenview Road, Glen Arm, MD 21057.

*Warrior Jim Hellwig is now marketing merchandise through the company that he formed when he left the WWF, Ultimate Creations. He has a limted edition poster that is directed towards women for $28.45, which includes a free 1994 Warrior calendar. To receive a free catalog of products including Warrior Wear clothing, Killer Warrior workout tapes, photo packages, and more, call 800-747-WARR or write to Ultimate Creations at 8711 East Pinnacle Peak Road #199, Scottsdale, AZ 85255. A Warrior 900# will be coming soon.

*Woman and Kevin Sullivan are offering their t-shirt with both of them on a beach for $15 and 8 X 10 autographed color photos for $6 through Georgiann Makropoulos at 23-44 30th Drive, Astoria, NY 11102.

NEWSLETTERS

*Dave Meltzer at PO Box 1228, Campbell, CA 95009 produces the *Wrestling Observer Newsletter*, which is now officially entering into its eleventh year of publishing. In my opinion this is without a doubt the #1 newsletter on pro wrestling out there, as most everyone would agree. Meltzer, the pioneer of the wrestling newsletter trade, has over 5,000 loyal subscribers to his weekly encyclopedias on the wrestling business that keep everyone informed on what is happening in this business. He certainly produced some tremendous pieces in 1993 on the most important stories that took place. The cost for this publication is always $6 for 4 issues.

*Wade Keller at PO Box 201844, Minneapolis, MN 55420 produces the *Pro Wrestling Torch* newsletter, which is in its seventh year and has been coined by him as wrestling's weekly journal of news and opinion. In my opinion this is the #2 newsletter on the market today and it is obvious that Keller puts a lot of effort and devotion towards producing this twelve-pager week after week. It is in my opinion the most organized and most professional looking sheet on wrestling out there, full with news on the United States wrestling scene, interviews, and certainly controversial but informative columnists in Mark Madden, Bruce Mitchell, Chris Zavisa, and Carlie Gill. The cost is $6 for 4 issues. He is also putting his 1993 yearbook which will be available in early '94. Also Torch t-shirts are going for $9 each.

*Steve Beverly of 165 Smith Chamberlain Lane, Medina, TN 38355 produces the monthly *Matwatch* at $5 for 3 issues ($9 for 3 issues overeas). This newsletter, which had close to 1,000 subscribers and was considered to be within the top five sheets before it closed shop, made its return in 1993, and as in the past, it focuses on the television component of the wrestling industry and the influence of it on the success of the business. It features analysis' on the TV ratings and commentaries on the promotions' uses of television.

*Georgiann Makropoulos of 23-44 30th Drive, Astoria, NY 11102 puts out the monthly *Wrestling Chatterbox*, full of articles, artwork, and is considered to be a much more personal fanzine than most newsletters or magazines, at $2.50 per issue or $25 a year. She just produced a fantastic full color 1994 calendar with birthdays of the wrestlers and about thirty big color photos of wrestling's superstars. This 10 X 15 calendar is going for $10 ($14 for overseas). Also being sold by her is a two-hours-plus Buddy Rogers tape for $25 featuring rare footage of Rogers at the beach and at home dancing. More plugs! She also has the 116-page Bruno Sammartino Record Book, which includes results of all his matches, for $10 (free wrestling car sign). Next, she has "1001 Wrestling Trivia Questions" computer game at $13 for either the 5.25 or 3.5 size disk for IBM campatible. By the way, Georgie will be starting her own hotline in early 1994 and will talk, "Gossip, gossip, gossip" all day all the time at only $2 per call.

*Paul Adamovic at PO Box 303, Irvington, NY 10533 has disbanded his *Wrestling World Examiner* after nearly three years of quality publishing because of his desire to further his involvement in wrestling as an independent manager called Eddie Reality. He is putting out a special book costing $10 for his last hurrah, with an intended January release. The book will feature commentaries and opinions on the wrestling business, and many articles from columnists and other people Paul has

*Sheldon Goldberg of PO Box 2371, Jamaica Plain, MA 02130 puts out the bi-monthly *Mat Marketplace*, which is a the best place to find, trade, and sell all and any kinds of products and merchandise for serious, hardcore wrestling fans. Issues run $2.50 each. He is the source of all wrestling memorabilia. Goldberg is also selling authentic programs from '79-'88 of WWF, NWA, AWA, and Mid South events. Available as well from him is the odd 1982-83 Wrestling All-Stars trading cards.

*Jon Horton & Steve Prazak & Scott Hudson are pulling the plug on their *Shenanumake Post* ride of goofing that had hardcore fans howling around the country. Their final masterpiece, the December 1993 issue, is available for only $2 at PO Box 671683, Marietta, GA 30067-0029.

*Paul MacArthur produces *Wrestling Perspective*, which consists of talented, intellectual writing on the wrestling business about important subjects.. Also, they have put together a five issue set of their works, The Midnight Express Special, which has interviews with Jim Cornette, Bobby Eaton, and Stan Lane. The popular set goes for $7.50. The usual price for *Perspective* is $1.25 an issue ($2.25 if outside of the US).

*Barry Rose of 200 Leslie Drive Apt 717, Hallandale, FL 33009 puts out a good read in *Chairshots*, which features great columnists in former Arena Reporter Ron Lemieux, Jeff Bowdren, Pete Lederburg, and more. John Hitchcock takes care of the fine cartoons, and readers supply the enjoyable letters. All this for only $1 an issue. Right now he has copies of his 30 page year-end issue for $3.

*Evan Ginzburg at PO Box 640471, Oakland Gardens Station, Flushing, NY 11364 produces the monthly *Wrestling Then & Now* newsletter at $1.25 an issue and is also offering his 1993 Annual for $8. This is a must for readers who are looking for nostalgia and a focus on the history of the sport. Evan also has multi-colored quality WT&N t-shirts that are selling for $12.

*David Wright produces one of the most accurate and informative newsletters from England, *Arena Report*. His current issue has an explosive expose on the "ring rats" over in England. Usually he also reviews the WWF and WCW events that are held over there, as well as discussing the differences in what European fans see on their TV shows from the major promotions. The cost in U.S. cash is $2 an issue at 87 Duddell Road, Smallthorne, Stroke-On-Trent, Staffs, ST6 1LS England.

*John Lawson at PO Box 516, Terre Haute, IN 47808 now produces *Wrestling Spectator Monthly* for $2 an issue or $18 a year ($3 an issue or $24 for a year for overseas). This sheet is very well laid-out, looking very professional. This debuting newsletter covers TV results and all the latest news going on in wrestling, with a special regard to the Indiana independents. John also has a large collection of fantastic photographs available for $1 each (3x5) and $1.20 (4x6). Grab bags containing ten photos go for $5.50. A set of ten photos of women and valets in wrestling from the 80s and 90s goes for $10. To receive a catalog of the photographs, send a SASE, or $1 for a sample photo.

*Brett Whalen of 4253 North Gale Road, Davison, MI 48423 produces the bi-weekly *Locker Room News* at $1.50 per issue or $9 for 7 issues. It is WWF oriented sheet with news, trivia contests, and interviews. Recent interviews have featured Sherri Martel, Bruce Hart, and Tito Santana.

*Jeff Mullins of PO Box 36189, San Jose, CA 95158 does the very funny and goofy *Son of Pro Wrestling Sushi* at $4 in cash only for 4 issues. This newsletter is full of comedic stories parodying important things taking place in the business at that time, as well as other styles of putting across pertinent insses that need to be discussed.

*Dave Prazak of PO Box 4005, Lisle, IL 60532 puts out the bi-weekly *Outside*

Interference newsletter at $6 for 4 issues. This is largely an opinion sheet with a large staff of columnists delivering interesting commentaries on the news in wrestling. This reads very interestingly because of the many different and varying opinions that are expressed in this newsletter.

*Scott Teal, now on the Cauliflower Alley board, of PO Box 2781, Hendersonville, TN 37077 produces the bi-monthly *Whatever Happened To...?* nostalgic newsletter at $3 an issue ($4 out of US). This unigue sheet features biographies with loads of information on wrestlers of yesterday and today. It is also focuses on retired wrestlers and what they're doing these days.

*Jeff Cohen is ceasing publication of his sheet called *Fantasy Federation*. He is offering his lat three issues at a very special rate of only $2. Send orders to 50 Shelley Lane, Great Neck, NY 11023.

*Gary Langevin of 124 Maple Street, Newport, VT 05855 publishes the digest-size monthly *On the Mat* newsletter for $2 each. This sheet has improved in its content and is quite interesting to read for responses to events that take place in the wrestling world. Also each issue features an interesting interview with some of the prominent indy stars current working in the United States.

**Piledriver* is published monthly by Glen Radford, 73 Humber Road, Beeston, Notts, NG9 2ET England at $2.50 an issue. His 48 page 1993 yearbook was recently released.

*Tommy Fierro at 14 Terrace Ave., West Paterson, NJ 07424 produces the *Ringside Wrestling* newsletter which basically runs down the news at $5 for 4 issues and is also selling programs from his 12/5 convention in Wayne, NJ for $2.

**Special Events Connection* newsletter is a quarterly publication totally devoted to women's wrestling. This is a very fascinating sheet that does great features on different aspects of women's wrestling and the stars of it. It's $20 for 4 issues through Special Events at PO Box 453, Wilkesboro, NC 28697.

*Robb Block puts out *Wrestling News Time,* a WWF oriented newsletter that gives news and results with an occasional interview. $6 gets you 4 issues ($9 for 4 issues) at 13115 Sleepy Wind Street, Moorpark, CA 93021.

*David Doyle publishes the up and coming *Moonsault Press*, which of course holds Japanese wrestling in very high regard. This newsletter is written with a certain kind of repect in mind for the wrestling business. Each issue is only $1 at 10 Lakeview Ave., Braintree, MA 02184.

*The Rufolo brothers produce *Pro Wrestling Monthly* from 568 Speedwell Ave., Morris Plains, NJ 07950 at $2 an issue. This is the digest-size sheet that's full of information and interesting reflections on the business.

*Norm Connors of 1719 Rialto Street #A, Pittsburgh, PA 15212 puts out the *Kick 'Em in the Head* newsletter for $1 an issue.

*Mike Rodgers at 2740 SE Lewellyn, Troutdale, OR 97060 puts out the monthly *Ring Around the Northwest* for 50 cents an issue with all the news and views from the Pacific Northwest area. He is considered the source for information on wrestling around the Northwest He also sells a variety of color photographs of wrestling from Portland and other indys for $1 each.

*Jeff Zinger of 401 Springbank Ave. Unit #5, Woodstock, Ontario, N4S 1P9 Canada has a pack of back issues from his *Gag (Grunt N Groan)* sheet that he published back in the late 80s for only $10. Zinger put out a very innovative humor newsletter.

**New Wave Wrestling* magazine editor Michael O'Hara puts out *Combat Sports* at PO Box 651, Gracie Station, New York, NY 10028 for $2.50 an issue.

*Allan Greenburg of 5501 Adalbert #114, Cote St. Luc, Montreal, Quebec, Canada H4W 2B1 produces *Between the Ropes*, which features news from the States and a special "Montreal Memories" column on what was once a great territory. Send a SASE for more info on this publication.

*Lazarus Dobelsky of PO Box 34, Glenhuntly, Victoria 3163, Australia puts out *Piledriver* at $6 for a quarterly issue. This large magazine-type sheet usually around 40 pages with even some in color features info on wrestling in Australia, Japan, and mainly the organizations in the U.S.

**SLAM* at PO Box 2503, New York, NY 10001 is a bi-weekly sheet giving solid coverage to all the American promotions with news and views, and results, for $1.50 an issue or $6 for 4 issues.

*Rich Mancuso at PO Box 610, Throgs Neck Station, Bronx, NY 10465 produces the monthly *Keep It In The Ring* for $2 an issue or $27 for a year subscription. Rich also hosts a TV show in New York and will be on Sports Channel with a show by March.

*Terrance Machalek of PO Box 30, GRP 35-SS1, Winnepeg, Manitoba, R3C 2E8 Canada puts out a newsletter solely covering Canadian wrestling organizations called *Canadian Championship Wrestling* that can be gotten for $1.50 an issue.

*Steve Boucher of 37 Middlesex Road, Merrimack, NH 03054 puts out *Figure Four* at $1.50 for an issue.

*Louis DeVincentis of 5443 Wilson Mills Road, Cleveland, OH 44143 does *Pro Wrestling Express* at $1 for an issue.

*Mark Norman of 111R Mountain Road, North Granby, CT 06060 puts out *Pro Wrestling Rap Sheet* for $2 an issue.

*Vinnie DeCostello of 163 East Main Street #143, Little Falls, NJ 07424 puts out *Wrestling Leger* newsletter

*Adam Dykes of 6712 Baker Road #69, North Delton, British Columbia, V4E 2V1 Canada does *Northwest Wrestler* newsletter for $1 an issue.

*Ryan Oskar of 110 Maple Hill Lane, Akron, OH 44312 does *Pro Wrestling All Star News* for $1 per issue.

*Bill Aper and company produces the *Pro Wrestling Illustrated Weekly* with their best rate at $69.99 for 52 issues or $27.99 for 17 issues. This magazine type weekly features mainly results from all promotions. Send payment to London Publishing, PO Box 910, Fort Washington, PA 19034.

RADIO SHOWS

*Pro Wrestling Weekly hosted by Scott Cramer airs on WCJW 1140 AM from Warsaw, NY on Thursdays from 2-2:30pm and normally features interesting guests, and also has a good working relationship and understanding with the WWF and their talent.

*Radio WWF with Jim Ross and Johnny Polo airs Saturday nights from 9-11pm Eastern time on various stations in the U.S. The newsbreaking (for the average WWF fan) and some say quite interesting program can currently be heard in the following cities: Aberdeen, MD on WAMB 970 AM; Albany, NY on WHUC 1230 AM; Albuquergue, NM on KUCU 107.1 FM; Charleston/Huntington, WV on WTKZ 930 AM; Dayton, OH on WSWO 102.3 FM; Duluth, MN on WATW 1480 AM; LaCrosse, WI on WKBH 1570 AM; Minneapolis, MN on KFAN 1130 AM; Mobile, AL on WNSP 105.5 FM; Norfolk, VA on WGH 1310 AM; Peoria, IL on WPYS 1560 AM; Portland, ME on WLPZ 1440 AM; Sacramento, CA on KSAC 1240 AM; St. Louis, MO on KSD 550 AM; Springfield, MA on WNNZ 640 AM; Utica, NY on WIBX.

*This Week in Wrestling featuring host Michael O'Brien and segments with Paul Adamovic and Paul MacArthur currently airs Mondays 8-9pm from New Windsor, NY's WGNY 1200 AM, which will become the largest station in NY state outside of New York City on 1/1.

*WrestleTalk with Ric Carter can be heard in Las Vegas on Tuesdays from 6-7pm on KLAV 1230 AM. Recent shows have featured Cactus Jack and Steve Austin. He has highlight tapes available and a Bruiser Brody special with Terry Funk, Dave Meltzer, Jim Ross, and many more; send requests to him c/o KLAV, 2000 South Las Vegas Blvd. Suite 6201, Las Vegas, NV 89104.

*Wrestling Insiders with Mike Tenay (who is still on WCW's hotline) returned to the air 1/2/94 with a temporary one hour format on the American Forum Radio Network on Sundays from 10-11am Pacific time. Staring in February, Insiders will be returning to a two hour format of 9-11am Pacific time on Sundays. Check your local affiliates to see if they are carrying the show.

*Wrestling Update with Evan Ginzburg airs Friday nights 3:30-4am on 99.5 WBAI-FM outside of New York City.

HOTLINES

*Cookson Wrestling Connection at 900-446-1064 at $2 for the first minute and 99 cents each additional minute has daily updates from Alan Cookson, who also sells and trades videotapes. He is offering the AAA cards from 8/28 in Los Angeles and 8/29 in San Jose featuring a triangular match with Jake Roberts vs Konnan vs Cien Caras for $15 each at 851 Cherry Ave. #15-109, San Bruno, CA 94066.

*Insider Wrestling Update at 900-773-3373 at 99 cents per minute has news from U.S., Japan, Mexico, and everywhere else.

*Real Wrestling Hotline at 900-903-9030 for 99 cents per minute run by Jim Herd and Wayne Coulter has two different messages from different people every day. Mondays: Dave Meltzer and Mike Mooneyham, Tuesdays: Steve Beverly and Scott Hudson, Wednesdays: Dave Meltzer and Boni Blackstone, Thursdays: Scott Hudson and me, Fridays: Dave Meltzer and Jimmy Hart starting in January, Saturdays: Steve Beverly and Joe Pedecino, Sundays: Mark Madden and Georgiann Makropoulos. Roundtable discussions are conducted right after all pay-per-views conclude.

*Pro Wrestling's Hottest Hotline at 900-820-2010 for a total of $2 a call features newsworthy daily updates from the longest running line.

VIDEOTAPES

*Austin Productions in PO Box 3751, Tupelo, MS 38802 is selling its Mad About Wrestling two hour tape, which features rare footage of known wrestlers in smaller areas. Each tape is $14.95.

*Bob Barnette of 3103 Fifth Street #2, Santa Monica, CA 90405 and 310-396-2090 has many Japan and United States tapes available for $18 ($25 overseas). Arguably his finest efforts are his quite frequent four hour Best of Japan tapes featuring Japanese television wrestling from all groups. Write him for more information or a listing of his other high quality Japanese videos.

*Millie Camacho at 1236 Burke Ave. #7F, Bronx, NY 10469 will send you a list of U.S. tapes available for a SASE. Millie will also send you a list of merchandise that she's selling for a SASE.

*John Clark of PO Box 283, Wallingford, PA 19086 is selling the 10/30 Bensalem Bash two hour tape for $20 with Ted DiBiase vs Terry Funk, Sabu vs Chris Candito in a steel cage, Sensational Sherri Martel vs Jim Cornette, and an eight man tag team elimination Bensalem street fight match with Boy Gone Bad & Chris Evans vs Blackhearts vs Kamala & Tazmaniac vs Ray Odyssey & Johnny Gunn.

*Culture House Videos at 706 Heights Road, Dixon, IL 61021 released "An American Icon: The Lou Thesz Story" for $22.95. This tape has an interview with Thesz discussing the wrestling of the early 1900s, as well as matches featuring him in his prime.

*Omar DelGado at 718-592-0442 and 91-16 50th Ave., Elmhurst, NY 11373-4931 offers a free listing of his 350 tapes if you write him.

*Rob Feinstein of 865 Green Ridge Circle, Langhorne, PA 19053 has around 800 tapes and a catalog of all of them for $12. He is now offering a best of Sabu tape with all his U.S. matches and the best matches from Japan. Also available is Smoky Mountain events and all their television shows, ECW TV shows, USWA TV compilations, Jim Cornette's four hour interview with the fans from SMW's week of wrestling for the fans, New Japan commercial tapes, and Dream Slam I and II from All Japan Women.

*Greg Ferrell carries tapes from all promotions in the United States especially SMW and the USWA, Japan, Mexico, and also from the Northeast independent scene. For more information or to get your hands on his diverse catalog, write him at 20 Windsor Mews, Cherry Hill, NJ 08002.

*Thomas J. Fillius of 609 Heston Road, Glassboro, NJ 08028 trades and sells tapes of all wrestling.

*Steve Friedlander of 17 Tavo Lane, New City, NY 10956 has a 120 page plus catalog of his huge videotape collection. He only asks you to send him $2 to receive a copy of this list. He showcases Japanese wrestling, with men as well as All Japan Women and others. He has footage from other eras as well.

*David Geck of 1700 West Cerritos Ave. #307, Anaheim, CA 92804 and 714-956-0969 features a wide variety of tapes at great prices. He sells all WCW and WWF PPVs, and Japan TV tapes for only $5. Tapes full of highlights from WWF and WCW TV for $10. He has the NWA Crocket Tournament for $7, as well as the four hour 1991 WWF/SWS Japan show featuring Hulk Hogan & Tenryu vs Road Warriors for $10. He has best of tapes available with The Steiner Brothers, Bret Hart, Undertaker, Randy Savage, Owen Hart, Ultimate Warrior, Road Warriors; each tape going for $10. He also has "raw footage tapes" from many different WWF towns for only $5. Independent TV shows and cards from AAA, Herb Abrams' UWF, USWA, and GWF go for $8. Handheld independent shows with SMW, ECW, and WWA are selling for $6. Call or write him for his catalog.

*Ron E. Hed of PO Box 730502, San Jose, CA 95173 has over 2,000 super quality tapes for sale or trade and specializes in rare footage videos. He is offering his tapes for only $13 if you mention where you heard about it from, and he can be a regular supplier of Japanese wrestling. His October Japan tape of All and New shows is packed. He has the Best of W*ING's crazy gimmick matches, a great collection of Cactus Jack's classics, Ric Flair's classics from the 70s and 80s, the FMW 5/5/93 show with the Funk vs Onita explosive barbed wire match, and the 5/3/93 New Japan show with Hogan vs Muta and his comments after the match about the WWF.

*John Lanigan of PO Box 583, McKeesport, PA 15134 has a list of his Japanese and U.S. PPV tapes that he is selling. Send a SASE. He also is selling the entire *Pro Wrestling Illustrated Weekly* collection since its inception 9/89 till the present. He will accept the best offer for the nearly 200 issues by January 31, 1994.

*Rocky Lewis of PO Box 59, Imperial, MO 63052 specializes in all kinds of normal and rare womens wrestling matches on videotape. Write for more information and availability of certain matches.

*Roy Lucier of 14322 Harrington Street, Garden Grove, CA 92643 specializes in Mexican wrestling, including the AAA shows in the U.S.

*Jeff Lynch of 405 Hoodridge Drive Apt. D1, Pittsburgh, PA 15234 has tons of raw footage tapes from the smaller promotions in Japan, as well as the major organizations. He frequently updates his compilation of U.S. and Japanese wrestling tapes.

*Jim Melby at 1018 East Rose Street, St. Paul, MN 55106 has classic tapes in B&W of matches from the 50s featuring the luminaries of that time period. Any three episodes of your choice for $50. Write him.

*Richard Olander of 50-48 47th Street, Woodside, NY 11377 has old and rare tapes availeble for sale.

*Jeff Osborne of 3420 New Harmony Road, Evansville, IN 47720 and 812-428-4951 (with free wrestling messages frequently) has many tapes from many territories and many countries. He specializes in Memphis videos. He publishes his *Watch this Wrestling* newsletter to describe each tape he is selling. The sheet is $1 an issue ($1.50 outside of US). Jeff also has Memphis programs from 1978-1991 available in grab bags for $9 and Jushin Liger t-shirts for $12 each.

*PM Film & Videotape Company at 1905 North Atlantic Blvd. Suite E-5D, Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33305 has broadcast quality wrestling tapes from TV shows in the 50s through the 70s. Write for more info.

*Ringside Riot Promotions in c/o J.D. McKay, 308 East Main Street, Louisville, MS 39339 has four hour videos of their August 1991 independent cards that they ran with Ken Wayne, Scott Armstrong, Doug Gilbert. Each tape is $15.

*Slammers Wrestling Gym of PO Box 1602, Studio City, CA 91614 and 818-897-6603 has many different tapes of their young and learning athletes wrestling at their training center for $35 plus $5 S&H.

*Special Events of PO Box 453, Wilkesboro, NC 28697 is selling tapes of womens wrestling called Grudge Matches, featuring some of the best lady grapplers in the sport, for $35 (30 minute tapes).

*Larry Spitz of L&S Comix at 77 Marvin Lane, Commack, NY 11725 and 516-489-XMEN specializes in videos from all promotions around the world, classic matches from the great territories of the 80s, and specialty tapes such as best ofs and top 100 of the 80s. Each tape is $15 plus $5 S&H. L&S also carries action figures, t-shirts of Bruiser Brody, Jushin Liger, Jake Roberts, and Terry Funk.

*Brian Trammel of PO Box 74, Steele, MO 63877 has many Memphis and Smoky Mountain Wrestling tapes available for sale.

And it's only $3 for his complete tape listing.

MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS

*John Arezzi of 136 North Carll Ave., Babylon, NY 11702 is selling a special Weekend of Champions '93 convention package consisting of an 11 X 14 lithograph with ten autographs, video, program, and the complete set of 8 X 10 photos of the appearing stars for just $40. Also available is his 1992 convention tape for $10, program book from his Southeast Asia tour featuring ten autographs for $10, an assortment of ten autographed 8 X 10 photos from his conventions for $25, and a grab bag of five Hasboro WWF dolls that can't be bought in stores for $25. Send a SASE for more information on the merchandise for sale.

*Bill Ash of 37 South Elm Street, Paris, AR 72855 and 501-963-3353 makes any style of wrestling boots for many in the business. His work and business style in considered respectable by many.

*Roberta Bray of 11 Seconset Street, Worcester, MA 01602 runs the Mark Calaway (Undertaker) Fan Club. If interested send a SASE for more information.

*Tom Burke of 31 Groveland Street, Springfield, MA 01106 has a 40 page book he put out in 1977 dubbed the *Yellow Pages of Wrestling* for $11.25. This describes each and every territory of that era in their entirety.

*Michael Carman of 568 Fairview Drive, Carlisle, OH 45005 offers his ACE Wrestling World game, which can be obtained or inquired about by mail.

*Chokehold Collectibles of PO Box 3099, Fullerton, CA 92634 has the complete 350 card set of NWA's Wonderama trading cards from 1988 for $37. Also available is WCW's 100 card set by Championship Marketing that were released in 1991, for $13.

*Steve Ciacciarelli of 1648 58th Street, Brooklyn, NY 11204 is selling The Wrestling Adventure, a text only computer game for IBM and IBM compatibles on 5.25" disks. This game is going for $18. Steve also has a list of real old and rare wrestling magazines and books. Send Steve a SASE for more information on the game or his mags.

*Royal Duncan of 7600 North Galena Road, Peoria, IL 61615 produced a book with the largest and most accurate compilation of wrestling championships. The 300 page *Wrestling Title Histories* features the histories of over 500 championships, some even dating back to the 1800s. The cost of the tremendous book is $40.

*Neal Gandi of 1312 Putnam Blvd., Wallingford, PA 19086 is selling his collection of WWF Magazines from 1986 till present, all WWF Superstars and Spotlight magazine specials, pay-per-view and event programs from #132 and up, and LJN dolls: Jimmy Hart, Mean Gene Okerlund, Classy Freddie Blassie, and Ricky Steamboat. He also has a terrific small ring for the wrestling figures that was made by a former builder of the larger, real rings. It's going for $50. The Piledriver album is going for $10.

*Ray Gore of PO Box 263, Wilbraham, MA 01095 and 413-596-3395 has quite a large collection of autographs for trading.

*Mary Kate Grosso at PO Box 234, Seaside Park, NJ 08752 and 908-830-7819 makes teddy bears of any wrestler for $15 to $45. Also available from her and her mother is a ton of mostly WWF merchandise.

*Richard Hayes is offering booklets of the histories of wrestlers such as Frank Gotch, Ed Strangler Lewis, Antonio Rocca, and more. Send a SASE for more info to 58 Voorhis Lane, Hackensack, NJ 07601.

*Bertrand Hebert of 647 Ellice, Beauharnois, Quebec J6N 1X8, Canada has a popular wrestling game available. Send for more info.

*Mark "C. Hill" of 994 Kingston Drive, Cherry Hill, NJ 08034 is a very talented photographer, but he just hasn't been given his big break yet. He sells high quality 8 X 10 photos for only $5 and 4 X 6's for $1. He has many candid shots of most of Joel Goodhart's former TWA wrestlers including Luna Vachon posing for him on a pinball machine, as well as many fantastics shots of the current ECW stars.

*Fred Hornby of 82 Highland Ave., Port Washington, NY 11050 has huge Buddy Rogers and Antonio Rocco record books that are fantastic sources of information on both of them for $23 each. Also available are lots of magazines, scrapbooks, result books, decals, programs, pennants, and things which date back as early as the 50s.

*Marc Jacquette at 212 Ellis Lane, West Chester, PA 19380 and 215-696-0456 creates custom wrestling figures of choice from WCW and WWF LJN and Hasboro figures.

*Boyce Johansen of 5424 West 69th Ave., Arvada, CO 80003 puts out a newsletter and also has a large supply of magazines, newsletters, books, photos, trading cards, and wrestling videos that she is selling. Send $2 along to her to receiver her catalog or an issue of her sheet.

*Mike Lano, now on the executive board of the Cauliflower Alley Club, of 68 Sable Point, Alameda, CA 94501 has a wide selection of ringside and dressing room photographs available dating back to 1966. He shot most of the territories through the 70s as well as shots from Japan and Mexico trips. He'll send you a copy of his Canvas Cavity television show (on Manhattan and Paragon cable in New York) for a blank tape and a postage paid large envelope. He has footage of Otto Wanz' December tour as well as Japanese footage. Dr. Mike also runs the Dr. Kay Fabe Hotline at 900-990-6676 for 95 cents per minute which includes reports in Japanese and Spanish on their wrestling scenes.

*Maniax of 2-19-8 Nishimagome, Otaku, Tokyo, Japan 143 has large and detailed catalogues for 1992 and soon 1993 back issues of Weekly Gong Magazine available for $40 plus shipping and handling. Each issue of the magazine goes for $10 plus S&H.

*The Role-Playing Wrestling Federation at PO Box 68, Woodbury, NJ 08096 is offering free memberships to its play-by-mail wrestling game where you create your own characters and compete against others.

*Howard Roth at 111-17 66th Ave. Apt 1B, Forest Hills, NY 11375 has a collection of over 10,000 programs of many cities and promotions from the 50s to the present that he will xerox for you.

*Pete Ruggiero of "Pete's Place" at 2426 South Aldar Street, Philadelphia, PA 19148 and 215-462-4215 features over 30,000 photos taken on the east coast from the 70s and 80s and 90s that can be made and put onto anything imaginable. It's guaranteed your needs will be met.

*Mark Rumsey of 55 Sherman Street, Coldwater, MI 49036 has tons of trading cards such as 1987 Topps cards, all three series of WWF cards by Classic, and 1991 WCW Stomp cards. Send a SASE for more info on either buying or selling cards.

*Brad Simons of 3257 Trevose Ave., Trevose, PA 19053 has put together a yearbook on wrestling in 1993 that is available for $10.

*David Snyderman Games of 3127 Jolly Road, Norristown, PA 19401 and 215-277-4790 distributes Gutsmash Pro Wrestling, a text only wrestling game of over 400 wrestlers (with enhancements) for IBM ($32.95) and Commodore 64 ($25.50) computers.

*Paul Spiegel of PO Box 22164, Tampa, FL 33622 has 100 original boxes of the 1991 WCW Stomp collection. Each box contains 36 cards and goes for $8.

*Storm's Dream Team Wrestling from Storm Productions at PO Box 285, Dracut, MA 01826 is offering membership to their "roto" wrestling league where you build up a stable of wrestlers and compete against others. The ultra membership is $5 while the deluxe is only $3. Both include member card and official handbook.

*Big Andy Varga specializes in pro wrestling memorabilia, including photos, buttons, pins, dolls, custom standing cutouts, and custom clocks and plaques. You can reach him anytime at 201-340-9556 or write him at PO Box 383, Clifton, NJ 07011.

*WRB Creative Marketing Group at PO Box 2753, Shawnee Mission, KS 66201 and 913-722-2736 is selling the computer game called Pro Wrestling Promoter, which was actually created by former WCW town promoter Barry Jackson. In the game, you are the promoter and you must make decisions on all the different facets of promoting an event. The text only version is $29.95 while the game with graphics is $49.95, and both are available on either 3.5" or 5.25" disks.

*Wrestling Tracks USA, the TV wrestling talk show in New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut, featuring Radical Ric Rocker and Cowboy K.J. Tubtown, has a fan club and other items for sale. They can be contacted at PO Box 7324, Rochelle Park, NJ 07662.

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OPTION 2

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
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all. He's still there, which is one of the funniest things of all. I think that when they go on TV and they give you the main event and they go out there for ten minutes and goof around and have no storyline, and all of a sudden, bing, someone throws someone over the top rope because they couldn't come up with a finish, I think it tells people, "Why should we go to an arena to see big stars because they go just go out there and goof around, and nobody ever wins and nobody ever loses anyway?" Then they have to also cut down on the no-shows. I think it's just killed them. I think that they're really dead at the house show business and it's going to take a miracle worker to turn that around, because too many people have been screwed. How many people say they're never going back to WCW? I mean obviously, thousands and thousands and thousands. Because in the cities they used to draw 10,000, they now draw 800.

Nailz: I think that number one to improve the product I think that they should put the wrestlers on contracts as far as a yearly salary, also health benefits, social security, hospitalization. Benefits that any normal job has. I think that the wrestlers should stand up for themselves and quit letting these promoters pay them like a bunch of peons. We're supposed to be professional athletes. So why don't we get paid like professional athletes? Look at what a professional football player makes and look what a professional wrestler makes. And look what the sport of football draws and look at what the sport of wrestling draws. Wrestling makes far much more money than the sport of football, but the football players make far better money than the wrestlers. So somewhere along the line the money's not getting passed down. Anybody that knows anything about wrestling knows where the money stops. It stops at the top. So that's my big bitch. The guys are a bunch of spineless bastards when it comes to standing up for themselves. It's going to continue to happen, and then pretty soon these guys are going to go working back for $50 a night like it was back when you started out in Oregon and Tennessee. Because the promoters can do it. The guys allow it to happen. They allow themselves to be bought as cheap help. So the promoters just take advantage of it. It's too bad, but we brought it upon ourselves. If we'd stick up for ourselves, it wouldn't happen.

Matt Osborne: I think that it's too easy for a guy to get into the wrestling business nowadays and it needs to go back to where guys need to learn how to wrestle before they think they're a star and want to have some kind of a gimmick. Too many guys think they've got a body and got a gimmick and then want to be a star, and they don't know how to wrestle. That's what hurts the business. Because they get in and they can't back up their image when they get in the ring. It kills everything. I think it needs to go back to kind of like the old school days somewhat. Too many guys break in the business and they have no reason to be in the business because they don't know. A lot of guys in the business still don't know. They have a whole different wrong idea of being in the business. They think they want to be a star and once they get in the business if they do get a break, they start believing that they're really the character that they portray. Big mistake.

Sabu: They need better schools for the wrestlers. They shouldn't let just anybody be a wrestler, I don't think. Like in Mexico, I guess you have to be licensed every couple of months. That's the way it should be here. You've gotta pass the test, that's how I think. Like guys I train, if they ain't any good, I don't try to help them to get booked. They know that. Paul E. said before, if I wanted to help any of my friends, tell him and to give him a list, and he would help them. But I don't want him to help anybody because they're my friend. I want them to get the help because they deserve it, because nobody gave me anything unless I deserved it. If it would have been an easy road for me, being Sheik's nephew, I would have been that champion a long time ago and making money by now. I don't believe in that. If they're your friend and they're great, that's great. If they're your friend and they're the shits, then they shouldn't be there. It's a problem because everybody wants to get their friend in or somebody they know, and so do I, but I don't want any of my friends to be hired unless they deserve it. Because no one hired me because they're my friend. If it ain't too good enough for me, it ain't too good enough for them. But I'm trying to make the wrestling business survive as a whole, not just for me.

Tito Santana: I think the WCW is leading more towards this than the WWF right now. I think in order for the wrestling to survive and to make a rebound, you've got to go back to the old way of wrestling. You've got to put in two wrestlers that are capable of entertaining the people and giving them their money's worth. The tickets are high, and in most cases, they're not getting their money's worth of entertainment. You can't put an inexperienced guy with an experienced guy and expect to draw a house. Fans aren't stupid. I don't believe that that's been given to the fans. If there was something that the fans wanted to see, they'd go out and see it. I don't think there has been too much that the people have wanted to come out and see, to draw the big crowds that we were drawing at one time. I think if they do go back to the old style and re-educate the fans and give them some good wrestling matches and entertain the fans with some wrestling instead of with cartoon matches, we might get the fans back.

Kevin Sullivan: If I had the answer to that one, I'd have a mighty big job in one of the major offices! I don't know what needs to be done. But what I see is, ECW, they have a wonderful young guy between the scenes that is doing a great job there. They have a very good program that's obviously doing very successful, in the niche that they have. They appeal to wrestling fans. Which doesn't mean that people that don't appeal to wrestling fans and sell to other people, that doesn't mean they're wrong. It's a business, and the bottom line is putting asses in seats. Jimmy Cornette seems to be doing quite well. I think that the business is evolving, as it usually is. If we don't adapt, we die. We become like dinosaurs. So I think the business is going to go through some changes, a metamorphisis, and by the end of the year, it will be healthy. There may be another territory or two around the country developing young talent, as this business is a machine that eats talent. The business needs some freash, young talent.

Nikolai Volkoff: I have lots of ideas that could be done. There just needs to be good wrestling. No comedy. You cannot put a comedy show with the wrestling. I think the guys who try to run it should know something about it. It's very simple. Without experience, there's no knowledge. That is scientifically proven. If you did not do something or learn to do something, you don't know what you're doing. For those people who don't understand English, those people never draw good houses. They don't know anything about the business, it's as simple as that. No experience, no knowledge. In Russia I learned that in the third grade. I've been to small organizations' shows where there were sellouts, good crowds. Then Vince sold out the last big show he had. If they just put out a good product, the people will come.

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1993 YEAR IN REVIEW

While much of the news the year 1993 comes from incidents taking place outside of the ring such as legal trouble and management discontinuity, this year for the viewing fan was one of many surprises and intriguing occurances. The WWF's relationship with both the USWA and SMW was an incredible concept that was unforseeable just last year, but came about this year. Jim Cornette and Jerry Lawler's involvement in the WWF provided some fresh talent and exciting situations for Vince McMahon's promotion. Monday Night Raw and its distinct aura has given the viewers a much more modern wrestling show that brings the fan back the following week and the week after that. WCW continued on but under a direction of Eric Bischoff which saw many erratic changes come about; ie the Orlando tapings and the idea of taping wrestling like a game show and the increased amount of pay-per-views with the reduction and even less of a focus on house shows. In 1993 the house show business continued on its decline moreso in WCW than WWF (but both groups had to restructure their house show system) and the success of wrestling pay-per-views continue to drop. Television ratings seem to be steadily decreasing at a much slower rate. Entering 1994, this deterioration of the wrestling business continues on without any signs of a recovery. The following is a timeline of the important events of 1993.

1/04—The annual New Japan show at the Tokyo Egg Dome featured Tenryu beating Choshu, Sting beating Hase, Muta beating Chono in front of over 63,000
1/11—WWF's Monday Night Raw debuted and went on to become the year's highest rated and most successful wrestling show.
1/15—Paul E. Dangerously was fired by Bill Watts from WCW for allegedly falsifying his expense reports regarding his stays while in Atlanta.
1/24—WWF's Royal Rumble PPV saw Yokozuna win the rumble for challenging Bret Hart at Wrestlemania and Shawn Michaels beat Marty Janetty (who was fired).
1/25—Jim Cornette along with his Heavenly Bodies returned to WCW television on the studio at Center Stage. Rock & Roll Express beat the Bodies by DQ in a match.
1/29—Eric Bischoff was promoted to executive producer of television at WCW while Jim Ross was removed from all TV. Bill Shaw and Bob Dhue demoted Bill Watts..
2/01—Brutus Beefcake returned to the WWF at Raw tapings as Jimmy Hart turned babyface to help Beefcake from Ted DiBiase and IRS.
2/10—Bill Watts resigned from WCW amidst controversy over racial statements he made and Ole Anderson took over his position as vice-president of wrestling operations.
2/10—Ric Flair finished up with the WWF in Dortmund, Germany losing to Bret Hart before returning to the States to join WCW on 2/16.
2/11—Vince and Linda McMahon filed a lawsuit against Geraldo Rivera and Tribune Entertainment Co. over allegations that were made against him on their TV show.
2/18—Hulk Hogan returned to WWF television after an absence of about a year with Brutus Beefcake and Jimmy Hart challenging Money Inc.
2/25—Jim Ross resigned from WCW after he was taken off TV and demoted to a job of selling their syndicated World Wide television shows.
3/01—Arn Anderson debuted for Smoky Mountain Wrestling on leave from WCW and worked with Rock & Roll Express against Heavenly Bodies.
3/07—WCW aired the Tokyo Dome show from Japan but without the Steiners vs Hell Raisers match because of threatening legal actions made by the WWF.
3/09—Ultimate Warrior Jim Hellwig mysteriously dropped his multi-million dollar lawsuit that he had filed against Vince McMahon and the WWF.
3/15—Vince McMahon received an award from the Michael Landon Foundation and Hulk Hogan put him over saying that McMahon was his hero.
3/28—Jim Ross was announced as joining the WWF's broadcasting team by Vince McMahon on Ross' radio show in Atlanta.
4/02—Benefit was held for Kerry Von Erich's little daughters in Texas where the workers appeared for free, except Kevin Von Erich who wanted $1,000 to appear.
4/04—WWF's Wrestlemania PPV featured Hulk Hogan beating Yokozuna who beat Bret Hart for the world title and the debut of Jim Ross as a broadcaster.
4/14—WCW returned to New York City's Paramount theatre drawing 2,400 for a show that did not receive a very positive reaction from those attending.
4/18—WCW promoted an event at Toronto's SkyTent in SkyDome and drew their largest North American crowd this year of over 4,500.
4/21—Cactus Jack was stretchered out and didn't return for many months after his graphic match with Big Van Vader where Vader powerbombed him on the floor.
4/26—"Lightning Kid" Sean Waltman debuted for the WWF as a jobber but later defeated Razor Ramon in a surprise to get him over as a talent.
5/05—Onita pinned Terry Funk in front of 41,000 fans in Kawaski Baseball Stadium as the ring blew up after fifteen minutes in a barbed wire match.
5/14—Vince McMahon resigned as president of Titan Sports (but remained the CEO of the company) while his wife, Linda, took over the position.
5/23—WCW's Slamboree PPV featured a reuniting of the legends as well as Paul Roma being introduced as the new Horseman and Davey Boy beating Vader by-DQ.
6/13—WWF's King of the Ring PPV featured Yokozuna beating Hogan for the belt and Bret Hart being crowned king after beating Ramon, Perfect, Bigelow.
6/15—Hulk Hogan informed Vince McMahon that he was leaving the WWF with Beefcake and Hart and that he was cancelling future dates except the Europe tour.
6/19—WCW aired a mini-movie with Big Van Vader & Sid Vicious portraying attempting to murder Sting & Davey Boy Smith by blowing up their boat.
7/04—Lex Luger bodyslammed Yokozuna on the U.S.S. Intrepid and became the focus of the WWF with the start of the big campaign for him as a hero.
7/07—WCW revealed its future for four nights taping World Wide for the next four months and taping wrestlers with belts before they won them.
7/18—WCW's Beach Blast PPV featured Ric Flair capturing the NWA title from Barry Windham and Sting & Davey Boy Smith beat Big Van Vader & Sid Vicious.
7/25—Jim Cornette debuted for the WWF on Raw with SMW being acknowledged. Cornette became the mouthpiece for Yokozuna aside Mr. Fuji.
7/30—Jim Crockett, Jim Hudson, and Paul E. Dangerously's WWN drew more than 2,000 fans for over $20,000 at their first house show in Killeen, TX.
8/02—WCW drug tested their wrestlers for steroids for the first time since Bill Watts. Over half the wrestlers failed the tests but no one was suspended.
8/23—Vince McMahon and Pat Patterson were in the corner of a ref against Jerry Lawler in Memphis, where Lex Luger also pinned Yokozuna in a non-title match.
8/28—Mexico's AAA with IWC drew over 16,000 with over 6,000 being turned away at Los Angeles Sports Arena with Jake Roberts and Konnan featured.
8/30—WWF's SummerSlam PPV featured Lex Luger beating Yokozuna and Razor Ramon beating Ted DiBiase in his last match.
9/16—Shawn Michaels departed the WWF with the IC title after a dispute with Vince McMahon, but wound up returning two months later.
9/19—WCW's Fall Brawl PPV featured Rick Rude beating Ric Flair for the NWA world heavyweight championship and a WarGames main event.
10/05—UWFI promoted a Shoot Wrestling PPV from Japan featuring tough, martial arts style wrestling that drew as many buys as some of WCW's PPVs
10/08—Hulk Hogan's movie, Mr. Nanny, opened at the theatres only to be pulled several weeks later due to a lack of success at the box office.
10/16—Randy Savage with the help of host Jim Ross on Radio WWF buried Hulk Hogan and said Hogan was a liar for what he said on Arsenio Hall.
10/24—WCW's Halloween Havoc PPV featured Big Van Vader beating Cactus Jack in a brutal match, Sting beat Sid Vicious, and Rick Rude beat Ric Flair by DQ.
10/26—Sid Vicious and Arn Anderson were involved in a freak stabbing incident between the two in England that resulted in both out of action as 1994 began.
11/04—"Mr. Perfect" Curt Hennig began his current hiatus from the WWF due to reasons of a personal nature but is expected to return to either WWF or WCW in 1994.
11/12—Jerry Lawler was indicted on counts of statuatory rape and sodomy of a thirteen-year-old girl that is still unresolved and has kept him out of the WWF.
11/18—Vince McMahon and Titan Sports were indicted on charges of the illegal possession of steroids and conspiring to distribute them. The trial begins on May 2, 1994.
11/20—WCW's Battle Bowl PPV featured Big Van Vader winning the battle royal and sending Ric Flair out on a stretcher after the match was finished.
11/24—WWF's Survivor Series PPV featured Lex Luger winning the main event pinning Ludvig Borga and Heavenly Bodies beat Rock & Rolls for SMW tag titles
11/29—Bobby Heenan's departure was taped at Raw where Gorilla Monsoon dragged Heenan out of the building with Heenan waving goodbye to the arena and the WWF.
12/13—Davey Boy Smith's quitting caused them to retape the deal with Rick Rude and substituted The Boss (Big Bossman) into the picture.
12/16—Ted Turner addressed his wrestlers with a pep-talk type meeting and reassured them that there would always be a WCW for as long as he is around.
12/22—Jesse Ventura was signed by WCW for another one year while Bobby Heenan and WCW continued to negotiate a deal with him since leaving the WWF.
12/27—WCW's Starrcade PPV featured one and only one thing in Ric Flair winning his eleventh world title be defeating Big Van Vader for the WCW title.

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1993 CHAMPIONSHIP RECORDS

WORLD WRESTLING FEDERATION

WWF HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPIONSHIP

Bret Hart beat Ric Flair on 10/12/92 at a TV taping in the Place in Saskatoon, SK
Yokozuna beat Bret Hart on 4/4 at Wrestlemania in Ceasar's Palace Las Vegas, NV
Hulk Hogan beat Yokozuna in 00:21 on 4/4 at Wrestlemania in Las Vegas, NV
Yokozuna beat Hulk Hogan 6/13 at King of the Ring at Nutter Center in Dayton, OH

WWF INTERCONTINENTAL CHAMPIONSHIP

Shawn Michaels beat Davey Boy Smith 10/27/92 in Terre Haute, IN
Marty Janetty beat Shawn Michaels 5/17 at Monday Night Raw in New York, NY
Shawn Michaels beat Marty Janetty on 6/6 at Knickerbocker Arena in Albany, NY
Razor Ramon beat Rick Martel 9/27 at New Haven, CT Coliseum for held up title

WWF TAG TEAM CHAMPIONSHIPS

Ted DiBiase & IRS beat Earthquake & Typhoon 11/13/92 in Regina, Saskatchewan
Rick & Scott Steiner beat Ted DiBiase & IRS 6/14 at Civic Center in Columbus, OH
Ted DiBiase & IRS beat Rick & Scott Steiner 6/16 at Civic Center in Rockford, IL
Rick & Scott Steiner beat Ted DiBiase & IRS on 6/19 at the Arena in St. Louis, MO
Quebecers beat Rick & Scott Steiner on 9/13 for Raw in New York, NY

WWF WOMEN'S CHAMPIONSHIP

Alundra Blayze beat Heidi Lee Morgan 12/13 in Poughkeepsie, NY in tourney finals

WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP WRESTLING

WCW HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPIONSHIP

Big Van Vader beat Ron Simmons on 12/30/92 at the Arena in Baltimore, MD
Sting beat Big Van Vader in 16:00 on 3/11 at Wembley Arena in London, England
Big Van Vader beat Sting on 3/17 in Dublin, Ireland after a power bomb
Ric Flair beat Big Van Vader on 12/27 at Starrcade in Charlotte, NC

NWA AND NOW INTERNATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP

Great Muta beat Masahiro Chono on 1/4 at the Egg Dome in Tokyo, Japan
Barry Windham beat Great Muta 2/21 at Superbrawl at Civic Center Asheville, NC
Ric Flair beat Barry Windham 7/18 at Beach Blast at Gulf Coast Col in Biloxi, MS
Rick Rude beat Ric Flair on 9/19 at Fall Brawl at the Astro Arena in Houston, TX

WCW UNITED STATES CHAMPIONSHIP

ustin Rhodes beat Ricky Steamboat 1/11 at Center Stage in Atlanta in tourney final
Dustin Rhodes beat Rick Rude 8/30 at Center Stage Atlanta after belt was held up
Steve Austin beat Dustin Rhodes 12/27 at Starrcade in Charlotte, NC

WCW/NWA TAG TEAM CHAMPIONSHIPS

Rick Steamboat & Shane Douglas beat Barry Windham,Dustin Rhodes 11/92 Macon
Brian Pillman & Steve Austin beat Rick Steamboat & Shane Douglas 3/2 Macon GA
Arn Anderson & Paul Roma beat Hollywood Blonds 8/18 in Daytona Beach, FL
Nasty Boys beat Arn Anderson & Paul Roma 9/19 at Fall Brawl in Houston, TX
Too Cold Scorpio & Marcus Bagwell beat Nasty Boys 10/4 in Columbus, GA
Nasty Boys beat Too Cold Scorpio & Marcus Bagwell 10/24 in New Orleans, LA

WCW TELEVISION CHAMPIONSHIP

Paul Orndorff beat Erik Watts 3/2 in Macon, GA in tourney finals for the held up title
Rick Steamboat beat Paul Orndorff on 8/18 at the Clash in Daytona Beach, FL
Lord Steven Regal beat Rick Steamboat 9/19 at Fall Brawl in Houston, TX

SMOKY MOUNTAIN WRESTLING

SMW HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPIONSHIP

Tracy Smothers beat Dirty White Boy 6/11 in Knoxville, TN for the held up title
Brian Lee beat Tracy Smothers on 7/17 in Johnson City, TN

SMW TAG TEAM CHAMPIONSHIPS

Rock & Roll Express beat Tom Prichard & Stan Lane 11/29/92 in Knoxville, TN
Tom Prichard & Stan Lane beat Rock & Roll Express 1/18 in Newtown, NC
Rock & Roll Express beat Tom Prichard & Stan Lane 5/15 in Johnson City, TN
Bruise Brothers beat Rock & Roll Express on 6/28 at a TV taping in Council, VA
Rock & Roll Express beat Bruise Brothers on 9/11 in Morristown, TN
Tom Prichard & Jimmy Del Rey beat Rock & Roll Express 11/24 in Boston, MA

SMW TELEVISION CHAMPIONSHIP

Tracy Smothers won the tourney on 12/12/92 at television tapings in Morristown, TN
Night Stalker beat Tracy Smothers on 2/8 at a television taping in Jellico, TN
Tim Horner beat Night Stalker on 2/8 at television tapings in Jellico, TN
Bobby Eaton beat Tim Horner on 3/1 in Sevierville, TN
Brian Lee beat Bobby Eaton on 4/19 in Barbourville, KY
Bobby Blaze beat Dirty White Boy 6/7 in Cumberland, KY to win the vacated title
irty White Boy beat Bobby Blaze on 6/28 in Council, VA
Jimmy Del Rey beat Ricky Morton 8/16 in Clintonwood, VA to win the vacated title
Robert Gibson beat Jimmy Del Rey on 9/13 in Oakwood, VA
Dirty White Boy beat Robert Gibson on 9/13 in Oakwood, VA
Tim Horner beat Juicy Johnny on the television show airing 11/6
Tracy Smothers beat at a television taping on 12/6 in Jefferson, NC
Chris Candito beat Tracy Smothers at television tapings on 12/6 in Jefferson, NC

UNITED STATES WRESTLING ASSOCIATION

USWA TITLE NOW USWA UNIFIED CHAMPIONSHIP

Jerry Lawler beat Koko Ware on 12/14/92 in Memphis, TN
Papa Shango beat Jerry Lawler on 5/3 in Memphis, TN
Owen Hart beat Papa Shango on 6/21 in Memphis, TN
Jerry Lawler beat Owen Hart on 7/5 in Memphis, TN
Tatanka beat Jerry Lawler on 9/13 in Memphis, TN
Jerry Lawler beat Tatanka on 9/20 in Memphis, TN
Randy Savage beat Jerry Lawler on 10/11 in Memphis, TN
Jeff Jarrett won battle royal 11/22 Memphis for held up title Savage was stripped of it
Jerry Lawler beat Jeff Jarrett 12/20 at the Mid-South Coliseum in Memphis, TN

USWA TAG TEAM CHAMPIONSHIPS

Ron & Don Harris beat Moondogs Spot & Spike on 12/28/92 in Memphis, TN
Moondogs Spike & Spot beat Ron & Don Harris on 1/11 in Memphis, TN
Ron & Don Harris beat Jerry Lawler & Jeff Jarrett 1/25 in Memphis,TN in a tourney
Moondogs Spot & Flap beat Ron & Don Harris on 2/1 in Memphis, TN
Ron & Don Harris beat Moondogs Spot & Flap on 2/15 in Memphis, TN
Moondogs Spot & Splat beat Ron & Don Harris on 2/22 in Memphis, TN
Ron & Don Harris beat Spot & Splat 3/1 in Memphis which was ruled non-title
Brian Christopher & Big Black Dog beat Moondogs Spot & Splat 3/8 in Memphis
Moondogs Spot & Splat beat Brian Christopher & Black Dog 3/15 in Memphis, TN
Brian Christopher & Scotty Flamingo beat Moondogs Spot & Splat 3/22 in Memphis,
Moondogs Spot & Splat beat Brian Christopher & Scotty Flamingo 3/29 in Memphis,
Rex King & Steve Doll beat Moondogs Spot & Splat 4/12 in Memphis, TN
New Jack & Home Boy beat Rex King & Steve Doll on 6/21 in Memphis, TN
CW Bergstrom & Melvin Penrod beat New Jack & Home Boy 7/5 in Memphis, TN
Moondogs Spike & Cujo beat CW Bergstrom & Melvin Penrod 8/2 in Memphis, TN
Dog Catchers beat Moondogs Spike & Cujo on 8/16 in Memphis, TN
Moondogs Spike & Cujo beat Dog Catchers on 9/4 in Memphis, TN
Dog Catchers beat Moondogs Spike & Cujo on 9/13 in Memphis, TN
Moondog Spike & Mike Anthony beat Dog Catchers 10/4 Memphis for vacated titles
Brian Christopher & Jeff Jarrett beat Jerry Lawler & Red Knight 10/25 Memphis
Rex Hargrove & Koko Ware beat Brian Christopher & Jeff Jarrett 11/1 in Memphis,
Brian Christopher & Jeff Jarrett beat Rex Hargrove & Koko Ware 11/8 in Memphis,
PG-13 beat Jeff Gaylord & Mike Anthony on 11/22 in Memphis, TN in a tournament
Mike Anthony & Jeff Gaylord beat PG-13 on 11/29 in Memphis, TN
The War Machines beat Mike Anthony & Jeff Gaylord on 12/6 in Memphis, TN
Far 2 Wild beat War Machines on 12/15 in Evansville, IN

USWA SOUTHERN NOW HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPIONSHIP

Jeff Jarrett beat Brian Christopher on 12/21/92 in Memphis, TN
Brian Christopher beat Jeff Jarrett on 1/11 in Memphis, TN
Jeff Jarrett beat Brian Christopher on 3/1 in Memphis, TN
Brian Christopher beat Jeff Jarrett on 5/1 in Memphis, TN
Vampire Warrior beat Jeff Jarrett on 7/18 in Memphis, TN
Jeff Jarrett became champion and began wearing the belt on 8/23 in Memphis, TN
Tommy Rich beat Jeff Jarrett on 9/13 in Memphis, TN
Jeff Jarrett beat Tommy Rich on 10/4 in Memphis, TN
Buddy Landel beat Jeff Jarrett on 11/22 in Memphis, TN
Brian Christopher won title (allege 12/9 in Flatwoods, KY) because Landel left

EASTERN CHAMPIONSHIP WRESTLING

ECW HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPIONSHIP

Sandman beat Magnificent Don Muroco 11/16/92 at Chestnut Cabaret in Philly, PA
Magnificent Don Muroco beat Sandman 4/1 at Cabrini College in Radnor, PA
Tito Santana beat Magnificent Don Muroco 8/8 at the ECW Arena in Philly, PA
Shane Douglas champion due to Santana's exit and showed up with the belt on 9/19
Sabu beat Shane Douglas on 10/2 at television tapings at the ECW Arena in Philly
Terry Funk beat Sabu 12/26 at the ECW Arena in Philly, PA in a no-DQ match

ECW TAG TEAM CHAMPIONSHIPS

Super Destroyers beat Max Thrasher & Glen Osbourne 6/23/92 at Philly Sports Bar
Tony Stetson & Larry Winters beat Super Destroyers 4/2 in Radnor, PA
Super Destroyers beat Johnny Hotbody & Chris Michaels 5/15 in Philly, PA
Eddie Gilbert & Dark Patriot beat Super Destroyers 8/7 in Philadelphia, PA
Johnny Hotbody & Tony Stetson became champions 10/1 with Gilberts departure
Johnny Gunn & Tommy Dreamer beat Johnny Hotbody & Tony Stetson 11/13 Philly
Kevin Sullivan & Tazmaniac beat Tommy Dreamer & Shane Douglas 12/4 in Philly

ECW TELEVISION CHAMPIONSHIP

Jimmy Snuka beat Glen Osbourne 3/12 in Radnor, PA in the tourney finals
Terry Funk beat Jimmy Snuka 10/1 at ECW Arena in Philadelphia, PA
Sabu beat Terry Funk 11/13 in Philly, PA in a tag match with Hawk and Bundy

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1993 TITLE CHANGES

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1993 WRESTLING FLYER MAN OF THE YEAR
JIM CORNETTE

I chose "wrestling's busiest man" Jim Cornette, who eats, sleeps, and breathes the wrestling business for many reasons. His Smoky Mountain Wrestling, which has got to be considered one of the top three promotions in the country, has been in business for two years now and Cornette has been able to maintain a solid foundation for the viability of his undertaking through these rough conditions in the wrestling business. Cornette is the sole creative component of SMW, formats the weekly television show, books and runs the house shows, and even manages in his promotion. With SMW, Cornette has also created a distinguished, organized atmosphere for his wrestlers and all other employees to work in. I also believe that Cornette has done a lot for the wrestling business in 1993 with his working agreement with Vince McMahon and the WWF that currently exists as well as the working agreement he had with Bill Watts in WCW. Cornette was responsible for SMW's Heavenly Bodies and the Rock & Roll Express appearing on pay-per-views for both the WWF and WCW. And finally, one of the most important reasons Cornette is 1993 Flyer's Man of the Year is simply because he unlike many others in the business gave the paying wrestling fan what they wanted to see. Also Cornette fared decently in the 1993 Flyer poll results as his promotion was voted to have the best product this year and the second best television show, while he individually was voted the most effective manager with a landslide, the second best promoter, and a third place result for most oustanding effort and devotion towards his job.

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1993 OBITUARIES

January 27	**Andre "the Giant" Rousimoff**, 46, one of the biggest attractions in history, died in his sleep of a heart attack in a France hotel
January 31	**Joe McHugh**, 88, former WWF ring announcer for Allentown shows, passed away in a hospital near his home in in Allentown
February 18	**Kerry "Von Erich" Gene Adkisson**, 33, popular wrestler took his life shooting himself in the chest on his father's ranch in Dallas
March 10	**Dino Bravo (Adolfo Bresciano)**, 44, long-time Canadian wrestler, shot over five times mob-style in his home in Laval, Quebec
March 25	**Wally Karbo**, 77, once part-owner and promoter with Verne Gagne of the AWA, died in Edina, MN of a heart attack
May 16	**Little Coco (Stanley Littlejohn)**, 40, midget wrestler trained by Lord Littlebrook, passed away in Spartanburg, SC
May 25	**Dave "D.J." Peterson**, 33, former AWA wrestler, died in a motorcycle accident near his hometown of St. Joseph, MO
June 7	**Don Kent**, 60, member of the Fabulous Kangaroos of the 70s with Al Costello, died in Battle Creek, MI
July 17	**Phil Zacko**, 87, Philadelphia promoter for the WWWF for much of the 70s, passed away near Pottsville, PA
November 13	**Rufus Jones (Carey Lloyd)**, 60, wrestler of the territories for the 70s and the 80s, died of a heart attack
December 13	**Larry Cameron**, 41, who wrestled mostly in Calgary and for Otto Wanz, died backstage at a show in Bremen, Germany

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1993 PAY-PER-VIEW ANALYSIS

BUYRATE-EVENT STATISTICS

2.01	WWF WRESTLEMANIA IX on 4/4 from Caesar's Palace in Las Vegas, NV with about 16,000
1.25	WWF ROYAL RUMBLE on 1/4 from the Arco Arena in Sacramento, CA wit a sellout of about 16,000
1.20	WWF SUMMER SLAM '93 on 8/30 from the Palace of Auburn Hills, MI with about 19,000
1.10	WWF KING OF THE RING on 6/13 from the Nutter Arena in Dayton, OH with a sellout of about 7,000
0.82	WWF SURVIVOR SERIES on 11/24 from the Boston Garden in Boston, MA with a sellout of about 16,000
0.55	WCW STARRCADE '93 on 12/27 from Independence Arena in Charlotte, NC with a near sellout of about 6,900
0.50	WCW HALLOWEEN HAVOC on 10/24 from the UNO Lakefront Arena in New Orleans, LA with about 6,000
0.50	WCW SUPER BRAWL on 2/21 at the Civic Center in Asheville, NC with a sellout of 6,500
0.50	WCW BEACH BLAST on 7/18 from the Gulf Coast Coliseum in Biloxi, MS with about 8,000 (4,000)
0.46	WCW FALL BRAWL on 9/19 from the Astro Arena in Houston, TX with about 4,600
0.40	WCW SLAMBOREE on 5/23 from the Omni in Atlanta, GA with about 7,000 (4,000)
0.27	WCW BATTLE BOWL on 11/20 from the Civic Center in Pensacola, FL with about 7,000 (3,500)

OVERALL AVERAGE PROMOTION PAY-PER-VIEW BUY RATE

World Wrestling Federation	1.28
World Championship Wrestling	0.45

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1993 TELEVISION ANALYSIS

TELEVISION SHOW	YEAR	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
WWF Monday Night Raw	2.83	2.63	3.10	2.82	3.00	2.67	2.80	2.90	3.08	2.20	2.85	2.84	3.03
WCW Saturday Night	2.33	2.40	2.85	2.23	2.10	2.00	2.00	2.14	2.83	2.25	2.28	2.73	2.15
WWF All-American	2.16	2.03	2.50	2.30	2.00	2.14	2.40	2.33	2.18	2.10	2.00	1.88	2.08
WCW Main Event	2.00	1.87	2.40	2.43	1.90	1.90	2.03	1.83	2.22	1.63	1.68	2.03	1.77
WCW Power Hour	1.39	1.40	1.50	1.48	1.33	1.28	1.11	1.36	1.43	1.55	1.28	1.60	1.35
WWF Mania	1.20	0.95	1.40	1.28	1.08	1.06	0.98	1.06	1.28	1.13	1.28	1.43	1.43

OVERALL AVERAGE PROMOTION TELEVISION RATING

World Wrestling Federation	2.06
World Championship Wrestling	1.91

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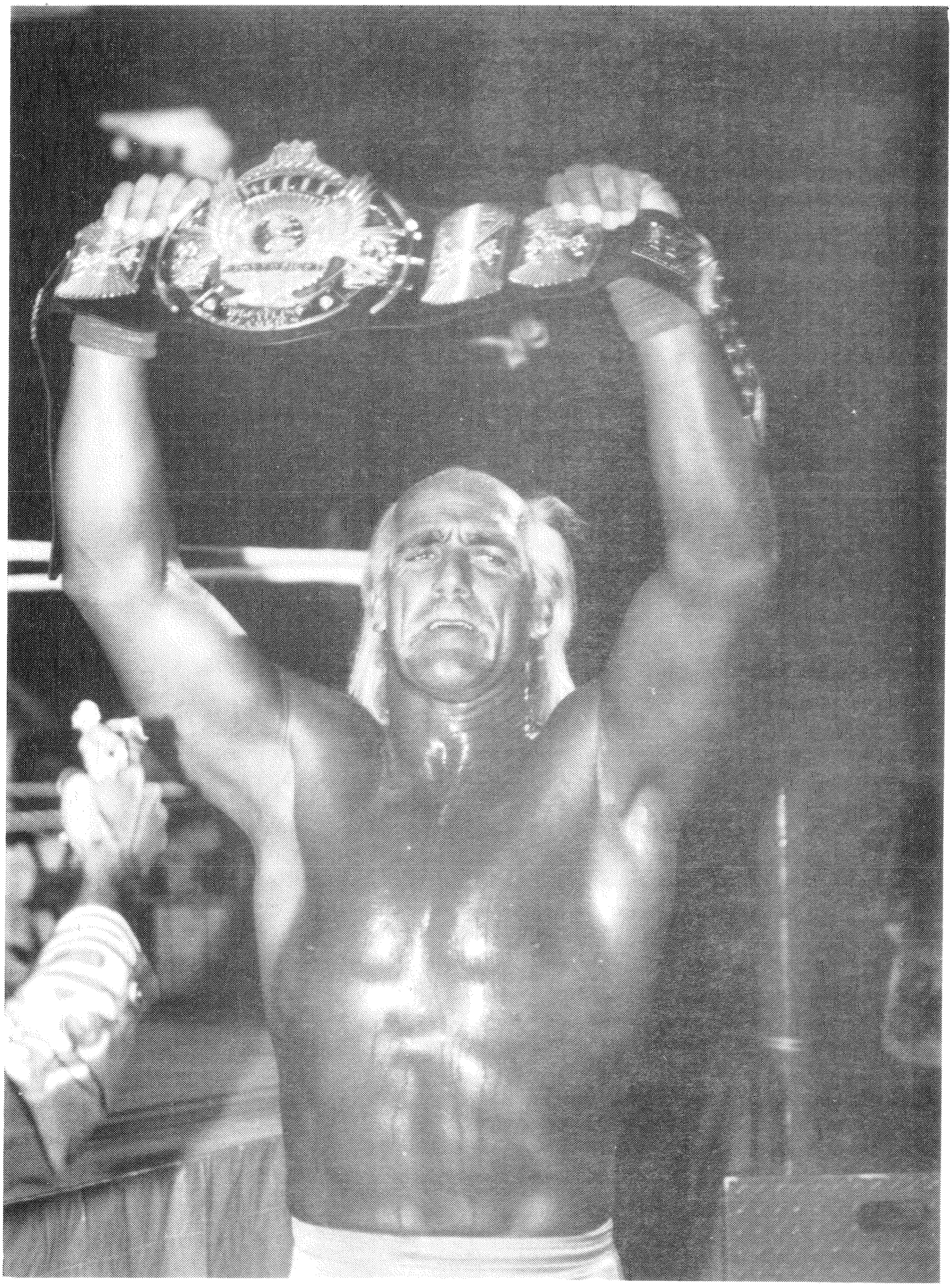
SABU

VINCE MCMAHON



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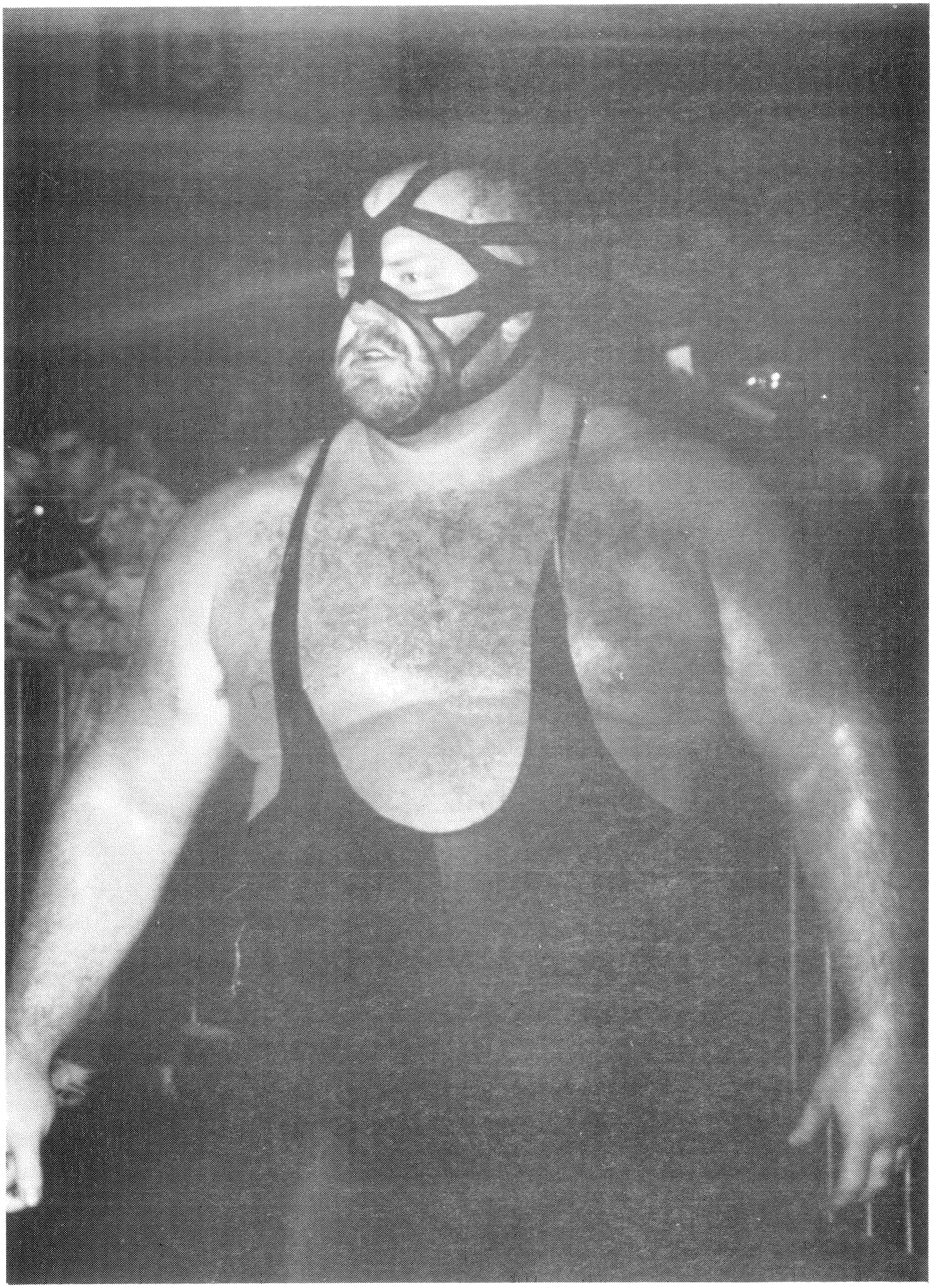

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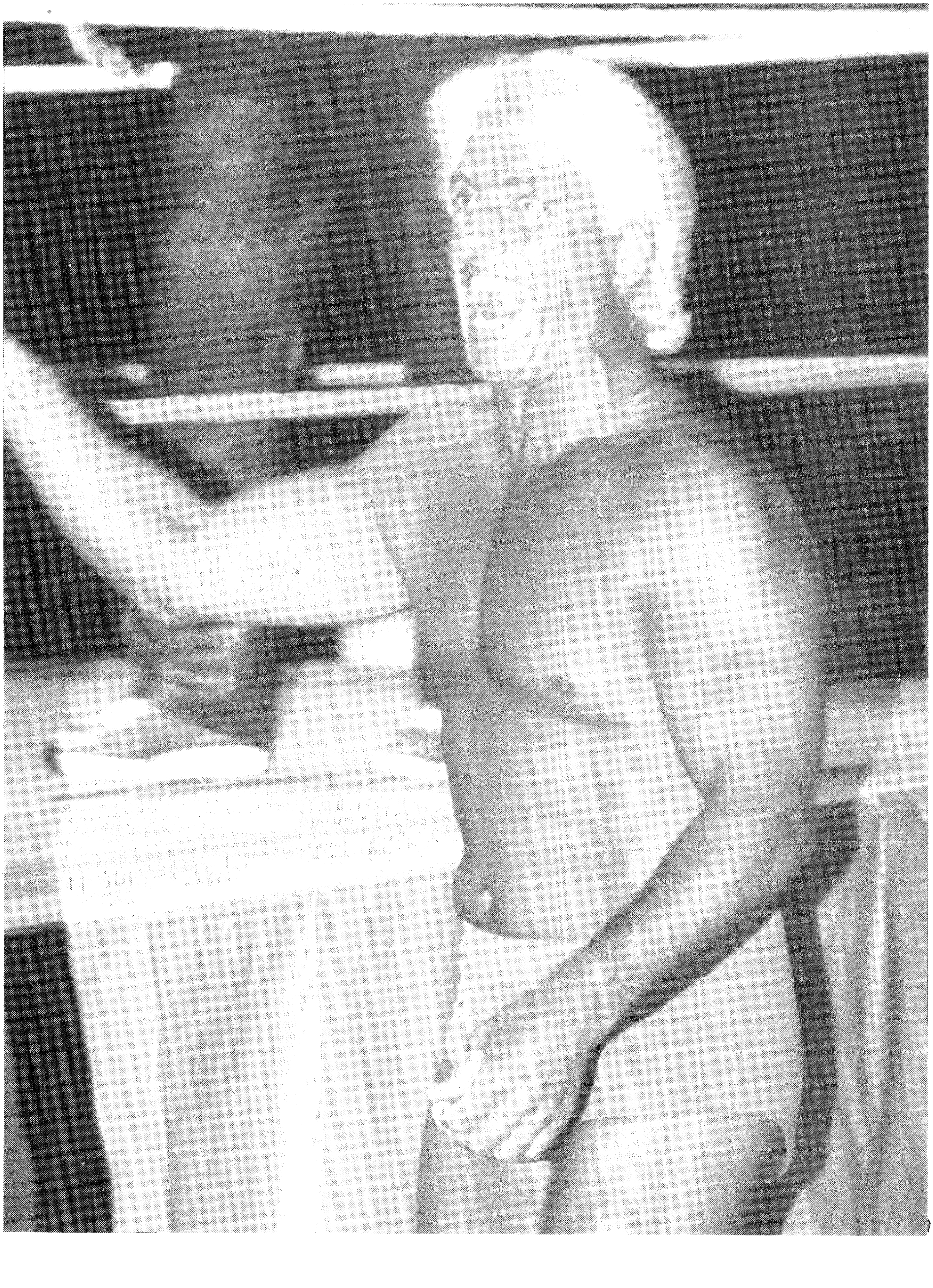

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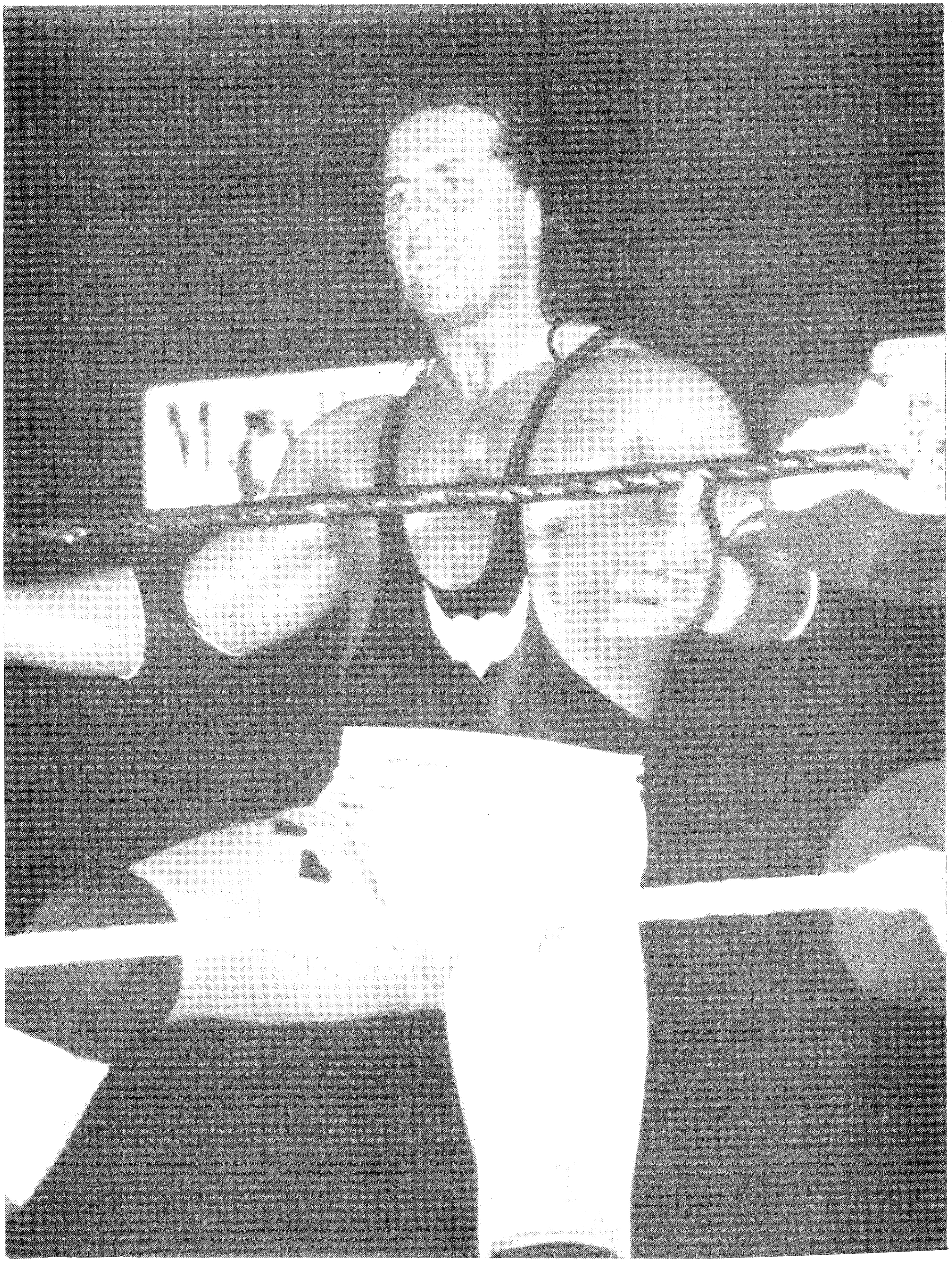

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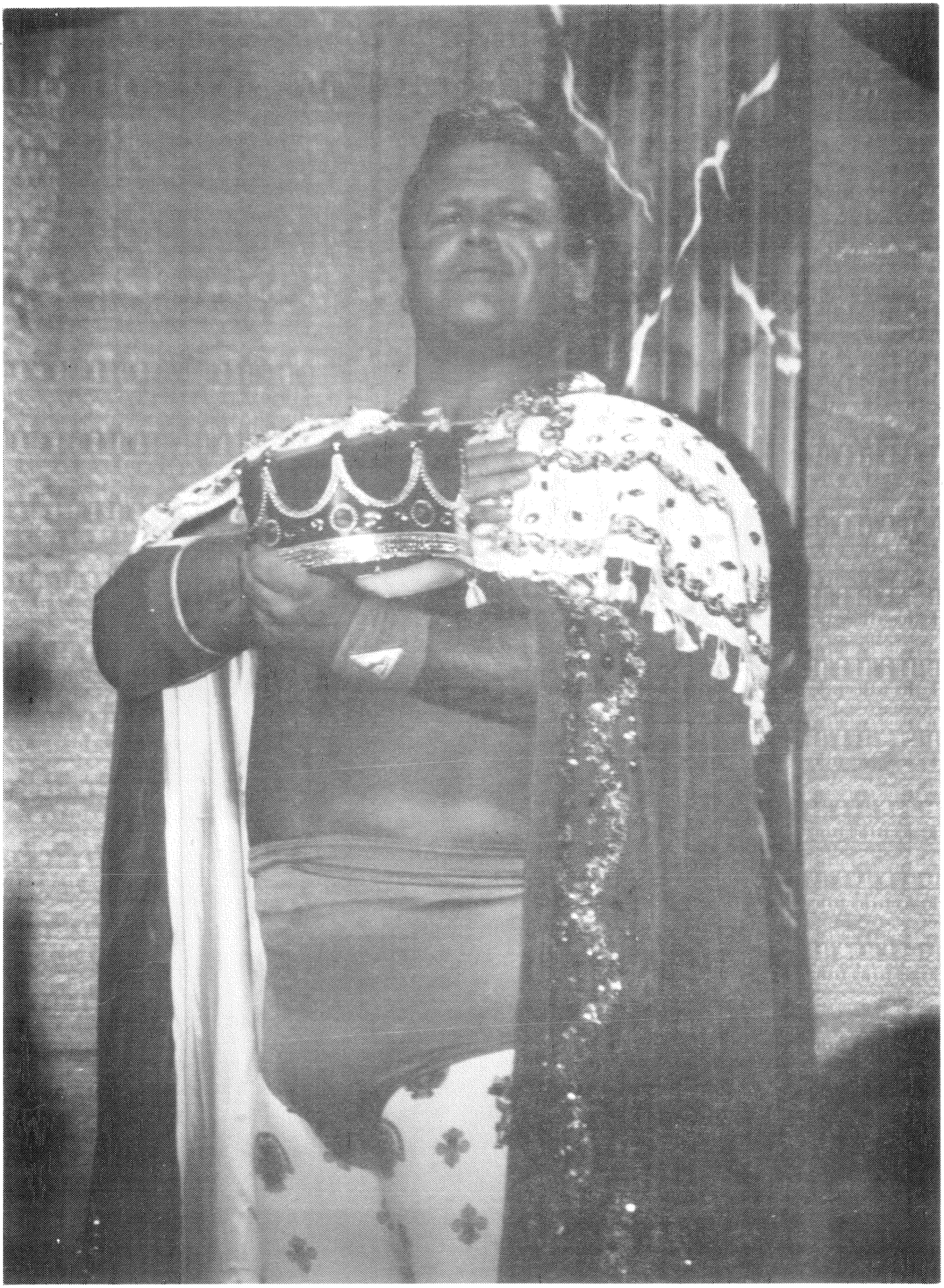

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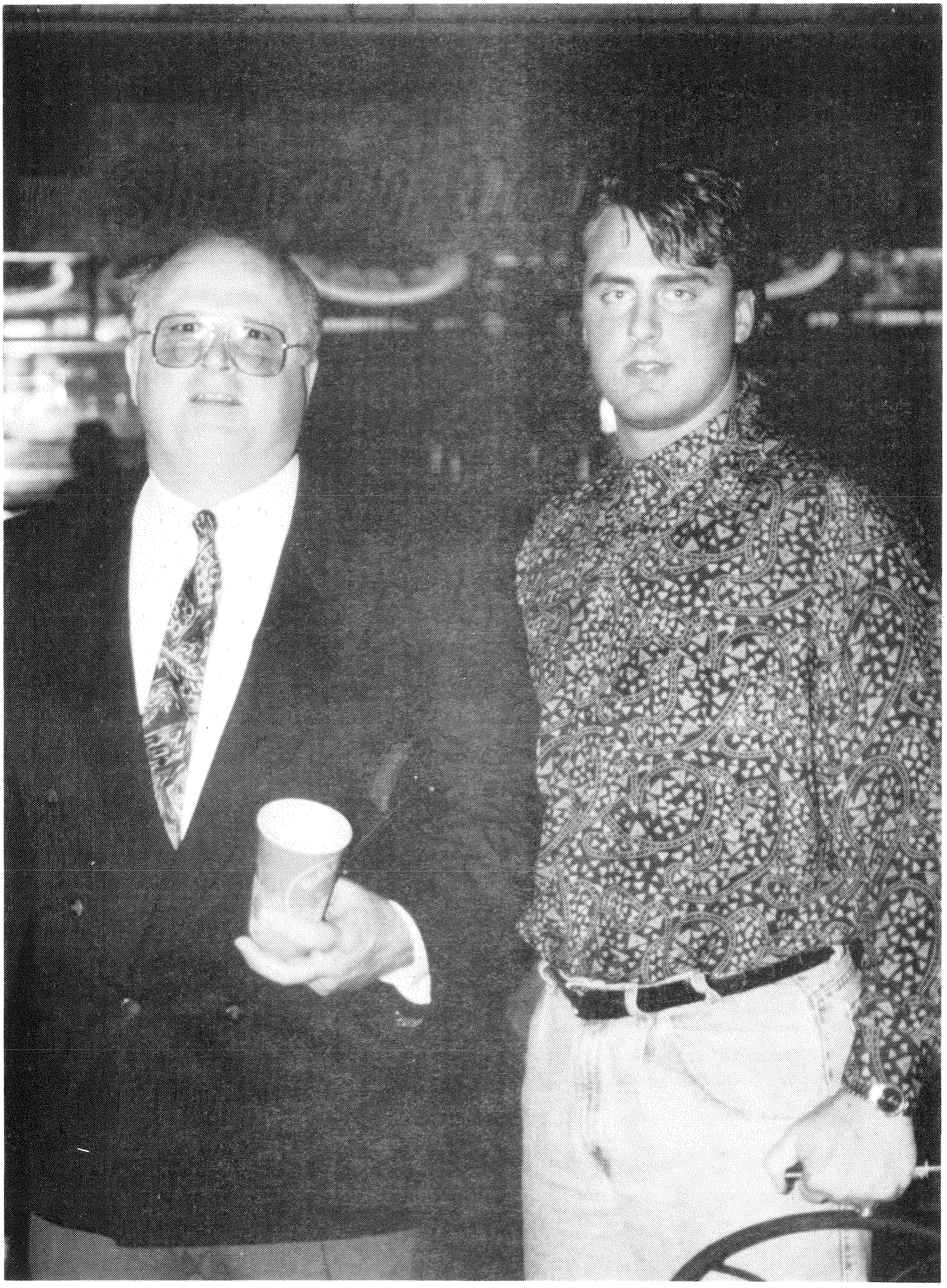

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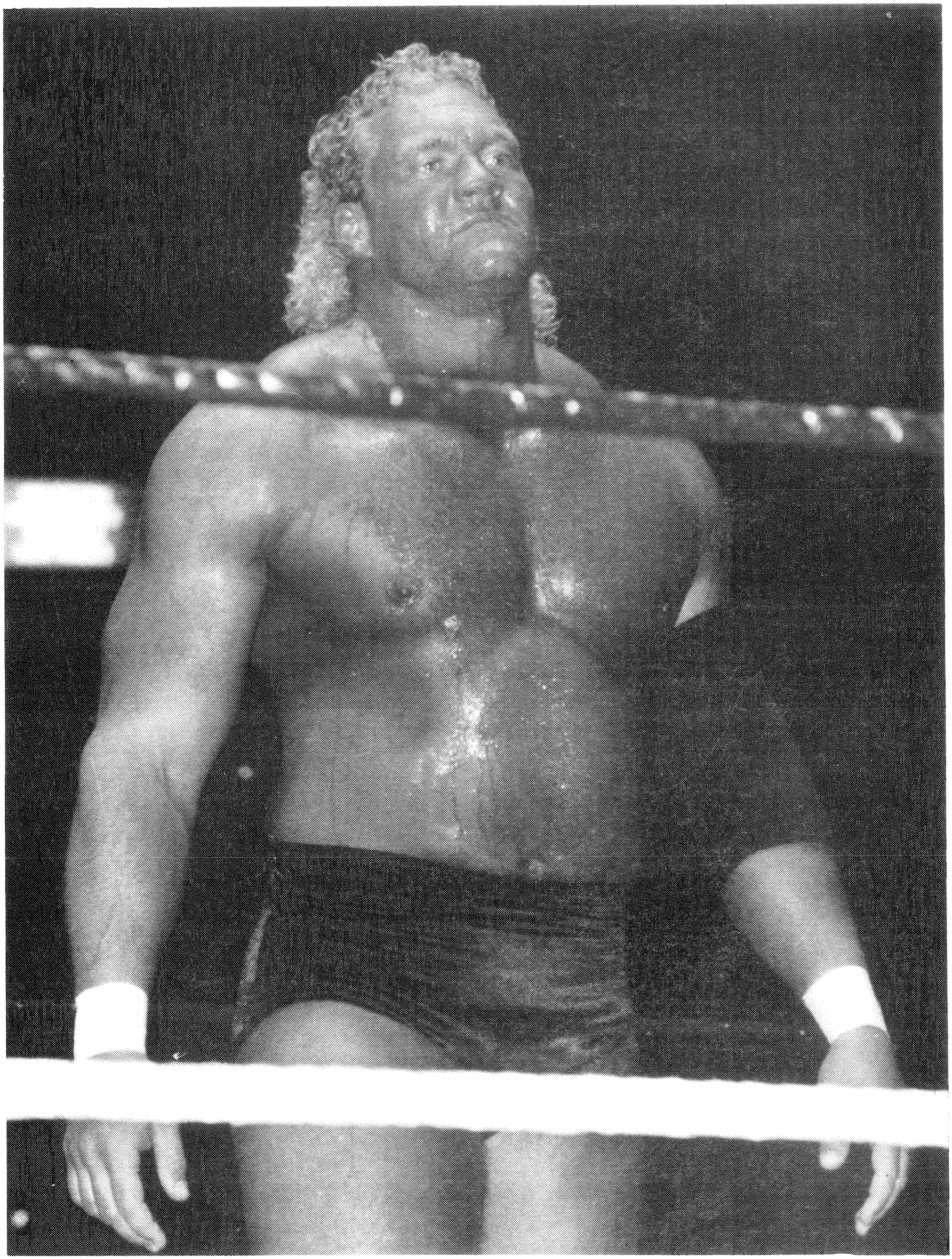

SID VICIOUS

INTERVIEW
SID VICIOUS

The first section of this interview with Sid Vicious (Sid Eudy) was conducted via telephone from his home near West Memphis, Arkansas on December 23, 1992. In this segment, he talks about starting out in the business and advancing to the positions he had with the national promotioms. This part also discusses his thoughts on the WWF and dealing with Vince McMahon, as well as the subject of steroids.

John Clark: Why did you first get involved in professional wrestling? Did you see it for the sport it is or did you see it for the entertainment part of it, like the soap opera part of it? Or did you see it for the money that could be earned in it?

Sid Eudy: Well, truthfully, if you just want it bluntly, it was for the money opportunity, the money that you could make. It's sort of weird, I've told this story a thousand times, and it's funny how I got into wrestling. I had just gotten out of a camp. When the USFL football ague had started up, I had been in a camp with the Memphis Showboats and then I was brought up by the Houston Gamblers the last year of the USFL. I hadn't played football since high school, I didn't play any college ball. And this was all on just natural ability, which it was back then. It was sort of like the (wrestling) business was a long time ago. The market had opened up and more people had a chance to get a job in professional football, with two different big leagues going. In the NFL, there's very few people that never went to college. And so, this USFL thing sort of folded and I had gotten a scholarship offer at a small little university here in Arkansas to go there for a couple years and get my experience and then try and go back into football. And I had just gotten married at the time. So, I was working out a lot over in Memphis and I met Randy Savage and Lanny Poffo, who were in the Memphis territory at the time. And I got to talking to Lanny. He was asking me what I was doing. And I told him, "Man, I'm getting ready to go to Arkansas State this year and get a scholarship." And he was telling me, "But man, have you ever thought about wrestling?" I hadn't watched wrestling since the days of Jackie Fargo. I had farmed on my uncle's farm for like ten years or better. I hadn't really watched wrestling in a long time and I said, "No, I hadn't really ever thought about it." And he told me, "You have a real good chance of making it." And I think that Hillbilly Jim was in that territory at the same time and he was talking to me once in a while. So sure enough, I talked to them and I got to thinking, god, I could be in the money quicker if I went the wrestling route instead of trying the football. And the wrestling seemed like a longer career, too. Of course, I was thinking $30,000-$40,000 a year, and god, I'd be sitting on top of the world. I never knew the money was really out there to be made. So, that's how I got my first interest in it. I started training down there in Nashville in that school with Tojo mamoto. So I guess the short way, yeah, I just started for the money. worked Memphis territory for like three weeks. Then I went down to Continental and I was working down there. In your first couple years of wrestling, you're just so caught up in being a wrestler and getting that notoriety from the fans and trying to learn the business and hearing so many things and going through the simple things in the business like learning how to trust someone, who to trust, who not to trust. I remember calling my wife on the phone sometimes saying, "You know honey, I talked to a guy last night and this guy told me that I'm going to be a big star one day." I never knew that I would be, but just how people bullshit you and lied to you about "I'm going to get you a shot here and there." And I'd say, "Yeah, this guy thinks he can get me in New York (WWF)." And that guy didn't have a clue. I didn't know to believe the guy or not. If he could get anybody in New York, he'd get himself in there, right. That was the goal everybody set for themselves, it seemed, to get to New York, to get to New York. And the people that knew they couldn't get there, it was the downs of New York, the downs of New York. So when I first started, yeah, I started for the money, but then it didn't seem long and then I really got caught up in the other part of it, you know, how things worked. And I got real lucky. Since I've been in the business, I've gotten to ride with or hang around with a lot of, what I consider, people who really have got good minds for the business, and some other people who've been close to the people like that. In my first territory, Continental, a lot of people knocked the guy Robert Fuller, but he had some great ideas and a lot of the things that he did worked. When we were in Continental, that territory was twice the territory Memphis was. I mean, we did so much more business. We ran in the same buildings those guys ran in and outdrew them by three times. It's just that he (Fuller) got really screwed around there, but I got to hangout with him a lot and became real good friends with him. He'd let me hangout and go through some ideas in parts of his TV that he would do. And he'd ask us questions sometimes and god, we didn't have any answers. But, it was fun. And ever since then, I've always sort of been intrigued with that part. And one time, I was riding down the road with Pez Whatley, and he was telling me a lot of things that he had done, and we were talking one night. I remember exactly where we were. We were coming down 231, coming from Dothan, going back into Montgomery (Alabama). We were talking about something, I can't remember what we were talking about. He said, "Sid, man, for someone who hasn't been in the business for eight months, kid, sounds like one day, you could be a booker." I didn't even have an idea of what he was talking about. Of course, one day, that's where I'd like to be, in that position. Now, I'm in the business, I'm not really in it for the money anymore, I've made my money. And just because the way luck has been for me, I'm going to be able to set myself up with the next couple years, then I won't have to worry. So now, I would like to do the other part of it. I mean my whole life, I've always enjoyed helping people and stuff like that. Not just in wrestling, but in the gym, and helping these kids around the neighborhood learn the fundamentals of baseball, and things like that. It sounds corny as shit, I'm not bullshitting in the least, I really enjoy seeing other people do well and letting people have the chance. People sit back and point fingers on why the business or this territory is down. When basically, it's pretty simple why it's down. Things aren't matched up right. It's usually the simple things. Not just in wrestling, but anything in life. If you want to do something, if you go back to the basics and work real, real hard at the basics and then start polishing up other things, usually everything falls in place. But, it seems like WCW, up until now, hasn't had that because they never had anybody... I always heard from day one being in that place that Bill Watts was the guy that could straighten this place up. I heard about the guy and the way he was, he didn't take any shit from anyone. And then finally, Ole got the job. Ole always gave me a lot of shit all the time but I always liked the guy. Because I like a guy that's going to tell me exactly what he hates about me and I can tell him what I hate about him, or tell each other what we like about each other. Straight, so at least you know exactly where you stand and after you walk out of the ring with him, you don't feel like the guy stabbed you in the back because he just called you an asshole to your face. Ole came in and I thought, "Here is the chance I'm going to get." And I talked to Ole today and I told him I'd like to come back if things are right. So, we might try to talk next week. But to answer your first question, I got into it for the money and then I really started enjoying this business. And in years down the road, I'd really like to contribute to the other part of the business, and that's into creating the business. Unless you're born into the business, there's really no other reason to get into it other than that you're a big mark for it. No, I wasn't a big mark. Actually, I had never been to a wrestling match in my whole life. Except when I was a big fan in the days of Jackie Fargo.

Clark: When you were starting out in the business how did people, your peers, treat you as a newcomer to the business?

Eudy: When I first started getting into the business, everybody in my family--well, not my family, but my in-laws and stuff--were saying, "Get out of that, you'll never make it." My first territory I worked, only for a few weeks, was Memphis. Then, I went to Continental and came back. One of the old-timers there who is notorious for giving young guys a lot of shit, Buddy Wayne Peel. There were a bunch of guys in the locker room and he looked at me and said, "You know kid, you're the only guy in here that just wears boots and tights. Everybody else has got some hairdo or something." I think most of the places that I went, 90% of the guys that I worked around were always pretty kind to me. I worked in the Memphis territory and I really didn't meet many people in there that were really worth a shit. Lawler, he hated everybody. And Jarrett hated everybody. But, people like Buddy Wayne Peel and Phil Hickerson and all those guys were always pretty good to me. When I went to WCW for the first time, Terry Funk was real kind. Paul Orndorff and all those guys said, "Man, you've got great potential for this business." When I'd hear that from somebody like that, it really gave me a spark. It really made me believe. These guys like Terry Funk and Paul Orndorff and Ricky Steamboat, they really know what they're talking about. When they said that, you want to believe it. After awhile, after so many fake people you run into, you sort of have a thing with the ones that were genuine. And then when you did get that genuine response, it did make you feel good about what you have done in the business and where you have yet to go.

Clark: Earlier you were talking about people being caught up in the business and the stardom and just being a wrestler for their first few years in the business. And then it takes time to learn about the business. How exactly did you learn about the business and who were some of the people or your biggest influences in teaching you about the business?

Eudy: Like I said, Robert Fuller helped me out a lot in the beginning. In the beginning, you're always so caught up in being a wrestler that you forget a lot of the things. Back in that era, I rode with Phil Hickerson and a lot of the old-timers. They helped you learn about the psychology part of the business, and by just watching those guys. Don Bass was a big influence on me. One of the people that helped me a lot and probably didn't realize it was Arn Anderson. He's one of the first people that ever made me do an interview by myself. I was sort of scared to. I think he told me exactly what to say. And I said it and did pretty good at it. I don't think he realizes that and I didn't realize it until I'm just sitting here thinking about it. Arn was always pretty kind to me and helped me and gave me good ideas. Harley Race, I didn't get to be around him a lot, but he helped me a lot when he was around. Really, I guess it's just a combination of a lot of people in short spurts. I didn't really hang around one person a whole lot. Mike Rotunda, I rode with him a whole lot and learned a whole lot from him. That guy, man, is he smart. He really knows this business almost as well as anyone. He really does. He knows what works and don't. I learned as much from him as anybody because I was around him more. That was one thing he told me, "Everybody's gimmick has to be different and everybody's situation is going to be different so you've got to take some of these things and some will work for you- and you'll know when they work- and use them, but when they don't work for you, don't use them." I guess just being around a lot of good people, it's not really just one person that taught me about this business. Mike Rotunda would be a person I learned a lot more from. Danny Spivey is the one that helped me really learn the mechanics in the ring and helped me out. One of the things that was weird, it was in Richmond, Virginia. I think it was Mike Graham and Magnum in the dressing room. I was working with Luger that night. They knew I had this presence. I had been told about it and I felt this presence, but I really didn't know how to work with it. After the match that night, they told me a little thing to do- and that was to come back from the ring (walking towards the dressing room), and just stop, and just stand there. Sometimes just take that one step. I learned that. That's why I'm saying it hasn't just been one person. There has been a lot of people that have helped me do a lot of different things. And then sort of throw it together. I guess one thing I do is I drill myself constantly. I can't even sleep at night. Once I get back to my room I just constantly think about what I could have done that night to make it better. I just never can stop thinking.

Clark: Is their a lack of that teaching that you described with today's younger talent in that either they think they don't need to seek advice from others or some wrestlers don't work together anymore and share their experience and their advice with the younger talent?

Eudy: You know, when you meet people and you talk to say five people or ten people in a day, everyone of them has got a different personality. You'll see ten wrestlers, all of them have great bodies. But the question you asked was, did they just think they didn't need to or didn't want to? I don't think that they know to. A lot of times you point the fingers at a lot of different places, but the one thing you can say for New York (WWF) is they do help a lot of guys that need the help. Because I believe it's up to the office to make these guys work. You can only work so hard with him. There are a few guys that just think, and I've heard them say it--but there not in the business aymore--they can make it on their body alone, and that type of attitude like they were just made to be in this business. There's one guy, I'm not going to mention his name, I remember he was still training. I talked to him in Atlanta and he said some really stupid things. And he's in there now and he's still not making any progress at all. I think your high percentage of the guys just don't know. Because I didn't know for years how important an interview was. I was scared. I didn't want to do them. So, I never did one of them. It wasn't frightening, but it was a little embarrassing to get in front of the camera and talk like that and do your gimmick thing. But, what you realize is that is a very big part of the package and that you've got to work at it as hard as you do anything else.

Clark: What do you think gets a wrestler over more; wrestling skills of the wrestler or the personality of the character that they're portraying?

Eudy: In my opinion, the guy that's going to be over the most would be the guy who has fine tuned all the things together. I don't think one or the other is going to help you. I don't think being the greatest worker is going to be it. I don't think being the greatest talker would be it. I think you've got to have all of them. A guy told me one time that it was a silly goal of mine that I wanted to be one of the ten best workers in this business, and be one of the ten top guys that were in this business, and be one of the names that people would mention--"You remember that Sid Vicious, that was a money drawing sonofabitch," or "that was a hard working sonofabitch." That guy, Paul E. Dangerously, told me, "Sid, you will never be a good worker or a great worker. You're too big and that's not your gimmick." It bothered me at first and I told somebody about that, but I forget who it was. The guy said, "To be a